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ABSTRACT

The research described by contributors to this special theme issue deals with the core issues of education in the context of South Africa. These issues include teacher control over the process of educational reform and balancing the need for reform with the maintenance of standards in an industrializing society. These essays demonstrate the highly politicized state of education in South Africa. The articles are: (1) "The National Qualifications Framework: A Window of Opportunity for Black Adults in South Africa" (Bev Thayer); (2) "Teachers, Curriculum 2005, and the Education Policy Making a Process in South Africa" (Glenda Kruss); (3) "The Struggle against Marginalization in the Classroom: An Emancipatory Approach to Action Research in a South African Province" (Dirk Meerkotter); (4) "Policy Contestation and Conflict in the Demoralization of School Governance in South Africa" (A. Mfahary and Yusuf Sayed); (5) "Constructing Tutorials as a Young People's Club: An Approach to a Democratic Pedagogy" (Ed Katz); (6) "A Curriculum Approach for Participation: Lessons from Southern and Eastern Africa" (James Natsis); (7) "Going beyond Tarzan: Teaching about Africa in the 1990s" (Prexy Nesbitt and Jean Ann Hunt); (8) "Education after Apartheid: South African Education in Transition" (book review by Flora C. Gombe); and (9) "Democracy, Education & Swaziland" (Stephen Howard). Each article contains references. (SLD)

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Democracy & Education

The magazine for classroom teachers

Coping With Rapid Change: Special Focus on South Africa's Teachers

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Guest Editors: Stephen Howard and Harold Herman

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Democracy & Education, the magazine for classroom teachers, is a journal of the **Institute for Democracy in Education.**

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IDE promotes educational practices that provide students with experiences through which they can develop democratic attitudes and values. Only by living them can students develop the democratic ideals of equality, liberty and community.

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Coping with Rapid Change:

Special Focus on South Africa's Teachers

Guest Editors: Stephen Howard and Harold Herman

In the Winter, 1997 issue of *Democracy and Education*, *"Knowing Democracy: Teachers, Schools and Global Transformation,"* we encouraged an atmosphere of greater solidarity among the world's teachers. In this issue we try to practice what we preach. "Coping with Rapid Change," represents a growing partnership between Ohio University, the Institute for Democracy and Education and the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Many of the articles in this issue were solicited by co-guest editor, Harold Herman, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape.

The African continent today presents profound challenges to her teachers, balancing financial and curricular issues while dealing with a 100 year legacy of colonialism, 300 years in the case of South Africa. And it presents challenges to teachers in the West as well, seeking ways to include this, the continent of humankind's birth, across our busy curricula.

The partnership between the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and Ohio University has been designed to extend the knowledge and experience base about teaching and learning across two societies that share difficult histories of diversity. The University of the Western Cape was established by South Africa's *apartheid* regime in the late 1950s as the exclusive institution of higher education for people of mixed-race ancestry, called *colored* in South African parlance. Today, in a South Africa run by a nonracial government for the first time in its history, the University of the Western Cape is still a center of radical thinking and doing about the changing educational philosophy in the country. We are proud to present several Western Cape affiliated authors in this issue of *Democracy and Education*. For the first time South Africans of all colors may express themselves freely in any forum and they are taking advantage of this newly found freedom in every way. We apologize to the authors whose articles we were forced to cut due to space limitations, but appreciate their exuberance!

The research that our Western Cape colleagues describe in this issue connects with the themes that will be familiar to teachers in North America as well. They are the core issues of democratic education: how much control do classroom teachers have over the process of educational reform, and how do we balance the need for reform with the maintenance of standards in an industrializing society? Which teaching agenda is the most urgent in a society going through rapid change? The articles by our Western Cape colleagues demonstrate that education in South Africa, like the United States, is contested terrain. We also get a strong sense here of the highly *politicized* state of education in South Africa.

In our commitment to produce an internationally-focused issue of *Democracy in Education* each year, we have included here articles by Jean Ann Hunt and Prexy Nesbitt on the stereotyped images of Africa in North American curricula and on education politics in East Africa by James Natsis. Our book section has a review of a new collection on South Africa, *Education After Apartheid*, by a Ugandan graduate student at Ohio University, Flora Gambe. In a final piece, this editor reflects on a democracy and educational journey with teachers in southern Africa.

Our commitment at *Democracy and Education* to look in on our sister and brother teachers in their societal and classroom struggles around the world remains strong. We hope that this special focus on South Africa encourages teachers who read *Democracy and Education* to think about their situations in a comparative perspective. There are many forums being established across the globe in which teachers can share their ideas and we want to see *Democracy and Education* become one of them. Send us your suggestions and articles for future issues.

Stephen Howard
Guest Editor
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio

THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK:

A Window of Opportunity for Black Adults in South Africa

BY BEV THAYER

This paper sets out to explore what the National Qualifications Framework means for black adults in South Africa. Sensitive to the criticisms that have developed around this policy, it nevertheless makes an argument for its value as a social project that has redress and equity as underlying principles. It provides a window of educational and economic opportunity for the millions of South African adults who were systematically disadvantaged under apartheid. The paper begins by providing a brief outline of the apartheid legacy that has been inherited by the democratic state. It then moves on to describe the new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that has been enacted to redress this legacy. In the process of discussing the new framework it considers some of the values underpinning the new system. By way of conclusion based on my adult education experience I raise some tentative 'signals' that we may want to be aware of as we move into the implementation phase.

THE HISTORICAL LEGACY OF APARTHEID HAS RESULTED IN LARGE NUMBERS OF ADULTS BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE FORMAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

APARTHEID LEGACY

The Nationalist government in line with the overall principle and vision of apartheid, formulated and implemented different educational policies for the SA population, with no formal compulsory education for black children. In consequence resource allocation for education was unequal under the apartheid state. As a result of these policies a number of black adults would have either no formal education, some would have primary, with fewer being in the secondary levels. In comparison to the white population in SA, proportionately less black children would have been enrolled at primary level. Over the years under Nationalist rule, necessitated by the need for economic expansion, various measures have been adopted (such as double streaming) which has subsequently increased the number of enrollments at black schools that is to say, more black children were brought into primary education. However, while increasingly more students were completing primary education, fewer were getting through higher primary and secondary levels.

Along with the quantitative needs (i.e. the number of adults requiring education being very high) the legacy has left a qualitative gap which will need to be addressed by an adult education system of provisioning. The basic assumptions underpinning this system were black servitude and subordination, within the Verwoerdian apartheid policy frame which emphasized that education for black people had to happen entirely within the "native reserves, environment and community . . . that there is no place for them in the European community above the levels of certain forms of labour."

The historical legacy of apartheid has resulted in large numbers of adults being excluded from the formal system of education. Some would either not have reached the school gates while others would not have completed secondary education. Statistics for the post 1960s period testify to this trend, with recent statistics continuing this trend. For example the Adult Basic Education Survey estimates that of a total population of 26 million, there are nearly 7.5 million adults who are under-educated. These are based on the Central Statistical Service data for adults (15 years old and above) with less than seven years of education.

The above historical backdrop gives insights into the enormity of the problem facing policy-makers and practitioners in the new South Africa in order to achieve redress and equity in education for black South Africans. The recent enactment of the NQF will provide the scaffolding for implementation. It is to this that I will now turn.

The NQF was driven by an alliance of organized labour (Congress of South African Trade Unions, (COSATU), the ANC, the Nationalist State and Business under the National Training Board (NTB) as well as nongovernmental providers (NGO). The policy process from the start was an ideological mix, consequently many areas were contested. For example the NTB as the captain, was very influential in the early discussions arguing, not surprisingly, for a strong vocational strand. As more

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stakeholders boarded the ship, contestation around what counted as/ for knowledge became more virulent: instrumental rationality driven by the logic of capital, vied with worker control, driven by the logic of social justice for workers in SA. I will later consider how these contradictions played itself out in terms of the educational approaches implicit in the framework.

What was the relationship between this policy process and the interests of adult education? The first important point was that the two major stakeholders, organized labour (COSATU) and Employers (NTB) represented constituencies of employed adults. In both instances they were talking on behalf of adult learners who would have completed about 8-10 years of schooling (i.e. GEC-FEC). Labour would have a larger chunk of adult learners concentrated at the bottom end of the framework (i.e. ABET, GEC).

THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION COLLAPSES THE TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE THAT IS PURELY FOR PRODUCTIVITY . . . AND KNOWLEDGE THAT EMPHASIZES THE WHOLE PERSON.

The NQF organically grew out of the education and training needs for adults, although I must add a particular section of the adult population (e.g. formal employed adults). Needless to say, it was an important symbol for adult education, a type of signifier that inserted education for adults into the political agenda of the new state. The process was symbolic insofar as the educational interests of those who had been historically marginalized under apartheid was inserted into the new political domain.

WHAT IS THE NQF?

The purpose of a National Qualifications Framework is to make it possible for all candidates to achieve national qualifications through a wide variety of mechanisms and a multiple delivery system. The Framework will generate coherence across the traditional divides of education and training, and allow articulation between currently fragmented and divided sectors and institutions. It will also provide access to, and progress through, recognized qualifications for all learners, whatever their level, and allow learners to transfer credit across different modes of study and qualifications within a national framework. (HSRC).

The objectives as spelt out in the Act of 1995 are to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements; facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths; enhance the quality of education and training; accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large (See SAQA Act 1995).

These objectives are underpinned by a number of principles such as *integration* which is to provide a unifying approach to education and training, *relevance* by which is meant that the system remains responsive to national development needs, education and training has to have national and international *credibility*, there has to be *coherence* in the certification frameworks, *flexibility* in terms of pathways, *standards* are to be nationally agreed upon, education and training should be *legitimate* in the eyes of national stakeholders, it should have flexible *access* points to facilitate progression for learners, there should be *articulation* arrangements for learners to move between components of the delivery system as well as *progression* routes that will facilitate movement via different combinations of the delivery system. Credits acquired should have *portability* across various institutions, through assessment education and training should *recognize prior experiences* of learners as well as provide *guidance* and counselling for learners.

The NQF is thus premised on principles of redress and equity, providing the enabling framework for the development of the nation at large. It is intended to contribute to the reconstruction and improved quality of learning and through the development of skills and knowledge that people will require to participate in all areas of society. In other words, it is about the social and economic development of the nation at large, acquiring the appropriate educational skills and knowledge that will enable people to adapt to economic and social changes in society.

Drawing on international work-based competence models it emphasizes the importance of the necessary skills to make autonomous and discretionary judgements in situations that are increasingly becoming uncertain and unpredictable. The assumptions underpinning competence in the NQF are those that . . . emphasize priority and risk assessment, autonomous judgement and flexibility in decision-making. It calls for the development of a broader and deeper "reading" of the context in order to anticipate and deal with the out of the ordinary and poses learning as an ongoing lifelong activity. Types of knowledge and understanding not solely related to immediate performance also emerge as a crucial requirement for competence.

It challenges the traditional way in which knowledge is looked at - the disembedding of traditional ways of thinking (e.g., thinking singular subject-specific ways) and the re-embedding of more generalized interdisciplinary approaches that cut across the idea of singular knowledge. The earlier boundary lines on various levels are weakened: between tasks at work, between work and non-work.

It is intended to contribute to the reconstruction and improved quality of learning and through the development of skills and knowledge that people will require to participate in all areas of society. It will also seek an integrated

approach to education and training which will then ensure portability across the different systems as well as remove the historical divide that has emphasized education for thinkers and training for workers.

The concept of *integration* collapses the traditional boundaries between knowledge that is purely for productivity (vocational-technical and as such instrumental) and knowledge that emphasizes the "whole person" (general education). The idea of *integration* is therefore the marrying of two disparate forms of provisioning and knowledge. This is a progression from the Verwoerdian legacy of vocational training that had as its intended consequence low level skills training for black people. In this sense it therefore can be said that in the policy debates a new integrative knowledge is emerging - one that promotes an understanding of the close relationship existing between work, civil society and the broader cultural context. It promotes a world view that goes beyond the narrow confines of the immediate work context as "increasingly it will be required that people are involved in tasks which are capable of having meaning in themselves and of supporting the sort of reflective activity which deepens one's grasp of a situation in both its technical and wider cultural manifestations."

Having briefly outlined some of the assumptions underpinning the new framework I will move on to consider the various levels of progression especially as it relates to educational mobility for adults.

The NQF policy can be seen as a form of modernizing technology, with linear levels of progression. It consists of eight levels and four sublevels to accommodate the adult basic education and training levels. The levels are divided into bands. Level one is called the General Education and Training Band. It includes ten years of compulsory schooling and the four adult basic education and training levels. Levels two-four are called the Further Education and Training Certificate Band which includes high school, college and trade certificates. Levels four-eight are called the Higher Education and Training Band and this includes diplomas, degrees, and postgraduate degrees.

Each level will have a qualification that will be built up from unit standards. The qualification would be the recognition of competence while the unit standards will be the recognition of capabilities. In order to obtain a qualification learners would need to submit themselves to an 'integrative assessment' exercise. This will provide each learner with an opportunity to show that she/he has integrated capabilities across a range of contexts. In other words the assessment becomes the vehicles of transfer. Assessment provides a mechanism to measure learner potential and consequently institute the relevant kind of supports.

The NQF and adult learners

The NQF provides a framework for adults to access the formal education system - adults without the requisite 10 years of compulsory schooling may in principle climb the qualifications' ladder. For example an adult who has had maybe five years of initial schooling would be able to climb the ladder through ABET rungs/levels which consist of levels 1 to 4. ABET begins with level 1 through 4, with the latter roughly equivalent to ten years of formal compulsory schooling. This means that once a learner has completed ABET levels 1-4 she/he will have the equivalent of a GETC. Presently where pilot projects are being run learners are writing exams at the ABET sub-levels in subject specific areas and once this has been completed they can then sit for the General Education Certificate. In other words once an adult successfully completes subjects of four levels, they are accredited with a General Education Certificate.

The NQF puts in place a single and unified qualifications system for all South Africans. This new policy frame has effectively started the process of dissolving the apartheid legacy of separate education. This was given further weight through the establishment of South African Qualifications Authority Act of 1995, whose purpose is to oversee the development and implementation of the NQF for the different levels of the education system in SA. SAQA thus becomes the political instrument for the official recontextualizing field of pedagogy.

In order to obtain a qualification learners would need to submit themselves to an 'integrative assessment' exercise.

The enactment of the NQF is historical insofar as it be-gins the process of dissolving the apartheid legacy of education in SA. It becomes the mechanism for eradicating the inequities and divides between education and training, making mobility between the two systems more flexible. One holding concept for this movement becomes that of life-long learning. The process of implementing this new framework poses both challenges and opportunities for the educational domain in SA.

By way of conclusion I will signal some of the areas that educators will need to be aware as we move towards the phase of implementation. In this sense I will draw on my personal experiences as an adult educator who has worked in highly politicized adult education contexts in South Africa. The adult learners I have worked with are black, men and women, from urban and rural contexts, on average 35 years of age, active in various organizational contexts such as health, literacy, civics, welfare, political, trade union and so forth. The educational programmes have had an explicit social change orientation- in the 1980s it was one of resistance and antiapartheid while in the 1990s reconstruction and reconciliation were key conceptual pegs for the curriculum in these programmes.

What does the NQF mean for this category of learner?

Firstly it provides an enabling framework for access into the formal system- from which the majority were excluded. In the sense it is a mechanism that provides this category of learner with institutional security. For the first time in SA history black workers have recourse to a legitimate educational system. In practice this means that workers can legitimately put pressure on employers to facilitate this process and this has happened on a number of levels and in different sectors of industry. The NQF can therefore be seen as a legitimate social project that offers a practical hope to the millions who were historically denied the basic right of school-based education. A legitimate and unified qualifications' structure in principle will give everybody equal access, although how it unfolds in practice can be quite complex. There have been a number of debates pointing to difficulties around the framework.

A second 'signal' is the notion of recognizing prior learning, a key principle underpinning the framework. On the one hand this is an important and strategic move insofar as it begins to validate the learning and knowledge that adults acquire outside a formal education context. It recognizes the non-formal knowledge as having value, thereby inserting the everyday experiential realm into the formal educational realm. Given the apartheid legacy that has foregrounded a privileged white, westernized rationality, this move brings to the fore the hidden experiences. The rhetoric of recognizing prior learning is a symbolic public statement that desta-bilizes and disrupts the traditional di-vide between what one learns at school and what one learns outside of school. In other words by inserting a discourse of RPL into an educational domain, it cuts through the idea that only know-ledge acquired formally, in traditional learning institutions are of value.

THE CHALLENGE FOR PRACTITIONERS AND POLICY MAKERS WILL BE TO JUGGLE AND MANAGE THE CRITICAL INPUT WITH THE INTERESTS OF THE MILLIONS WHO CRY FOR ACCESS.

Notwithstanding the symbolic importance of an RPL discourse into the public policy domain, there are some problems that could arise in the implementation. An example from experience, is that the prior knowledge learners bring to the learning context may not match the skills and knowledge required for the formal context. For example a learning situation may demand a fairly high level of analytical and problem-posing abilities which the adult learner may not have acquired. This then begs the question of the value that can be attached to the prior learning.

Moreover in this process there are further factors that need to be computed such as the assumptions implicit in standard setting which are bound to complicate the way in which we 'read' prior learning. I will use the above example of analytical ability to demonstrate my point. An adult learner may find the criteria used by the educator to judge analytical ability as biased in terms of race and gender, what then is the 'objective' mechanism for recognizing prior learning? How do we ensure that the standards are not gender and race biased? This brings me to a third 'signal' and that is the writing up of unit standards.

A factor to be considered when writing descriptors is the issue of subjectivity. Of course any criteria, in order to ensure transparency would need to be fairly objective. But this idea of detachment can be questioned. Surely in the writing of descriptors, the designers insert their subject positions? What this means in practice is that in the formulation of descriptors, the designers would have to be clear about the standpoint from which they write the descriptors, acknowledge this and move on to develop substantive solutions for descriptors rather than through detachment try to develop accuracy and exactitude.

The writing of clear descriptors based on the assumption of integrated knowledge would need to be built into the design, not separating general educational principles from narrow skills-based knowledge. In the words of Entwistle "general education is merely a more comprehensive category than is vocational education, which in turn, comprehends the more particular technical education: general education should be regarded as comprehensive of, and not an alternative to, technical and vocational education." In practice this would mean incorporating different stakeholders into curriculum advisory bodies. The traditional autonomy of the university whilst compromised on the one hand, on the other, opens the spaces for concrete articulation with other institutions.

The NQF as a framework poses challenges and opportunities. It is faced with a Herculean task to redress the inequities of the apartheid past. There are a number of problems that are being identified, one of which is that it could become an administrative and bureaucratic nightmare. The challenge for practitioners and policy makers will be to juggle and manage the critical input with the interests of the millions who cry for access.

Bev Thayer is a DEd student in the Department of Comparative Education at the University of the Western Cape and a former lecturer at the UWC Centre for Adult and Continuing Education

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Teachers, Curriculum 2005 and the Education Policy-Making Process in South Africa

BY GLENDA KRUSS

INTRODUCTION

When the Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bengu, announced the framework and philosophy for a new curriculum for the South African education system in April 1997, many teachers and educators were unprepared and rather vague about the new outcomes-based curriculum they were due to implement in four standards by January 1998. Many educators had little knowledge or understanding of how the new curriculum would be underpinned by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), adopted as the central mechanism for integrating education and training through specifying learning in terms of nationally and internationally accepted outcomes.

A central tenet of emergent education policy in the period of transition to democracy is that the integration of education and training is desirable, and indeed, necessary to further the dual goals of economic growth and development, and of equity and redress. The education policy framework promoted in the White Paper of Education and Training of 1995 (WPET) is based on a vision that all individuals must "have access to and succeed in lifelong education and training of good quality," to meet the social and economic challenges facing South Africa. The WPET proposes to address the demand for equity by promoting access for all to education of quality, and proposes to meet the state's Human Resource Development needs by promoting a new form of high quality education and training, through initiating a system of qualifications which encourages further or ongoing education and training, and through changing the status and nature of learning away from its academic orientation to prepare learners more for the world of work (Christie, 1997; De Clercq, 1997).

With the NQF proposals having emerged from the 'training' lobby, much of the policy debate after 1994 centered on the vocational dimensions of the NQF and implications for non-formal education. ABET and literacy (McGarth, 1997). However, the pace of development of the NQF has intensified since mid-1996, with the elaboration of the WPET's framework and principles in the form of the new outcomes-based curriculum (OBE) for the formal schooling system.

A great deal of concern has been expressed by teachers and educators at the rapid pace at which this new curriculum policy has been developed, and the ambitious proposed timelines for curriculum and materials development and implementation through the program of Curriculum 2005 (Wits EPU, 1997; Jansen, 1996). Such concerns and widespread ignorance exist amongst those scheduled to implement the new curriculum policy, despite the Department of Education's widely professed commitment to a fully participatory process of curriculum development and training in which the teaching profession, teachers educators, subject advisors and other learning practitioners play a leading role along with academic subject specialists and researchers (OBE in SA March 1997 and A Users Guide).

The disjuncture leads one to question - what is the nature of the education policy development process around Curriculum 2005? What is the model of policy-making that the new Department of Education is working with, who is participating in the process and how is policy-making occurring in practice? What are the implications of teachers specifically, and for curriculum change in general? These questions form the focus of this paper.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE EDUCATION POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

Conceptualizing education policy and the policy has become a field of academic enquiry in its own right (Ball, 1992; Prunty, 1985; McNay and Ozga, 1985; Hill' 1993). In South Africa, a vigorous academic and political debate around the nature of education policy began from 1990 (Badat, 1991; Kallaway, 1997). For the purposes of this paper, a distinction will be drawn between two common conceptual models of the education policy process.

The first is known as a 'rationalist' model of policy-making. It assumes that policy-making is essentially a rational process, which operates through classic steps, from formulation through to implementation. The educational problem is seen as one which requires technical solutions. Policies are seen as blueprints which exist prior to action, and are implemented on the external world through a controlled process. The process is assumed to be a consensual one.

The second, 'political,' model of policy-making typically begins from the assumption that policy is "the authoritative allocation of values," and hence,

that policy-making is essentially a political activity (Prunty, 1985). In this model, understanding power relations, conflict and contestation is crucial to understanding the nature of policy. Policy analysts who adopt a 'political' model are critical of the notion that implementation is a matter of automatically following a fixed policy text and putting legislation 'into practice' (Ball and Rowe, 1992).

A central tenet of emergent education policy in the period of transition to democracy is that the integration of education and training is desirable, and indeed, necessary to further the dual goals of economic growth and development, and of equity and redress.

Ransons's work illustrates this 'political' or 'values' approach. He proposes that policies "have a distinctive and formal purpose of organizations and governments: to codify and publicize the values which are to inform future practice and thus encapsulate prescriptions for reform" (Ranson 1995:440). Hence, policy is essentially contested, intrinsically political and necessarily a temporal process, involving issues of task and people. Ranson raises two apparently simple questions for investigation - how is policy to be formulated and carried into practice? And who is to be involved in the process?

Researchers and policy-makers have questioned the assumptions and analytical validity of the 'rationalist' model. Gordon et. al. note that "the power and survival ability of the 'rational system' model is surprising, given that its assumptions have been undermined by empirical studies of the policy process, and that its predictive record is uneven" (Gordon, 1993:8). They explain this durability with reference to its status as a normative model, and to the fact that it is often shared by policy-makers themselves.

The distinction between 'rationalist' and a 'political' model of the policy-making process is a very broad one, which masks debate within each model amongst those who claim to offer superior explanatory frameworks. Bearing in mind that the distinction provides a very broad tool of analysis, it is useful for the purposes of this paper. The distinction between these two conceptual models will be used to interrogate the new outcomes-based curriculum policy-making process in South Africa.

State and Education Policy making

Since 1994, that state in the form of the Government of National Unity (GNU) has attempted to forge a new hegemonic project which will ensure the conditions for capital accumulating and increase legitimacy through the incorporation of popular aspirations. The new hegemonic project is embodied in a contradictory policy which attempts to interweave social democratic values and rights with market-oriented values and rights. Coming to political power post elections on a wave of popular power, the ANC-led government had increasingly shifted right ward, with the adoption of neo-liberal economic policies in the form of GEAR, as opposed to the redistributive policies of the RDP (Kallaway, 1997). The ongoing tension between these two political imperatives is important in understanding educational politics. New forms of state governance have emerged, and limited gradual reforms have been initiated to address glaring inequalities in provision.

The GNU/ANC-led education ministry was faced with the legacy of an education system that was 'not working.' It was responsible for formulating education policy in the context of a declining economy, an under-skilled labor force, high unemployment rates, and gross inequality based on race, gender and urban-rural divides. The global economic and social order, with the dominance of international capital and a neo-liberal ideology of the market promoting privatization, deregulation and fiscal discipline has exerted a strong pressure on policy. All contributed to a growing consensus among influential policy actors that economic development requires a generally well-educated population equipped with the competencies and skills required by the economy as well as the qualities of flexibility and the capacity to learn. Thus, the commitment to a National Qualifications Framework and a curriculum grounded in a philosophy of outcomes was developed.

The tendency also continues for education policy to be driven by political imperatives (Morphet, 1996; Greenstein, 1996). Education remains one of the key spheres for the state to meet the social and political demand for reconstruction, redistribution and equity, in a way that is highly visible.

In this context, education becomes a key site for meeting popular aspirations for redress and equity, and for meeting the reformist economic agenda of capital, and consequently, will continue to be a site of hegemonic contestation. Such structural conditions limit and constrain the form and nature of new education policy, and the policy-making process.

Teacher Participation

If there is an explicitly 'political' model of policy making operating in tension with implicitly 'rationalist' model, what are the implications for teachers?

The rationalist model assumes consensus between all participants in the policy process, which leads to a notion of stakeholders working together in an uncomplicated way towards a common goal. However, the history of conflict between some teacher organizations and state departments has not laid a good basis for participation and working together. As one departmental

official in WCED explained,

> You are supposed to form an interest group with another stakeholder. Yet we come from such different backgrounds that we haven't yet established a proper working relationship, we don't understand one another yet . . . if we must now nominate one person to participate in one particular activity, am I going to trust you, that you will represent us?
>
> (Fassen 1997)

Teachers have also begun to mistrust organizations such as the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, SADTU, which entered into agreements with the state on their behalf through the Education Labor Legations Council, in the form of teachers redeployment policy. Some teachers organizations have tended to focus on economic-corporate interests of their members, and not sufficiently on organizing members around pedagogical and curriculum concerns. The difficulties of stakeholder representation were discussed above. Thus, the curriculum development process has been characterized by contestation and by difficulties in achieving consensus between stakeholders, and between stakeholders and the state. In the absence of a strong organized civil society, particularly teacher organizations, the state's centralizing thrust is facilitated.

The conceptual gap between formulation and implementation as separate steps in a rational process impacts on the legitimacy and ownership of the new curriculum for the key agents of implementation, the teachers and educators. The previous section showed that the national education department is increasingly firm in control of curriculum policy formulation, in a way that is separated from the provinces, and from teachers and education. The points in the process and the king of work teachers and their organizations have been involved in are an issue. Teachers and teacher organizations were underrepresented at key phases of the curriculum policy-making process. For example, the Western Cape was the only province which included representatives of teacher organizations in their delegations to develop Draft Learning Programmes. A key example is the National Pilot for Grade 1 which was implemented by each province simultaneously for 6 weeks from August 1997. Tight national control over monitoring, evaluation and assessment of the process occurred (Pillay, 1997). Teacher organizations like SADTU participated as part of the national monitoring team. The pilot was used to develop a national training programme for all Grade 1-3 teachers in October, to prepare and equip teachers to introduce the new curriculum in January 1998.

Significantly, however, it was the first point that individual teachers were brought systematically into the process on a mass scale. Final outcomes and a curriculum blueprint had been decided prior to the piloting process, so educators' views and experiences were not to be incorporated at the level of curriculum policy formulation, rather at the level of implementation. For many teachers it was the first time they were introduced to complex curriculum and pedagogical principles which require a considerable conceptual and practical shift. Teachers are being informed about changes, rather than having been involved in a process to produce them, or being equipped to produce the learning materials required by the logic of OBE. Moreover, there has been a basic lack of dissemination of information about the curriculum development process itself, as it has unfolded. to address the lack of information, the national department has initiated publicity strategies, including informational booklets, supplements in newspapers and a toll-free help line. Whether these reach those teachers in isolated and under-resourced schools is an open question, never mind the interpretations they will bring to bear.

Pilot schools:	*Training*	31 July to 2 August
Pilot schools:	*Training*	11 August to 19 September
Provincial training Grade 1	*Training*	6 October - 61 circuit clusters, 0 venues, approximately 140 working days required, 140 trainers
Provincial training: Trainers	*Trainers*	27 August - Training of trainer teams for orientation of Grades 2-6
Orientation: Grades 2-6	*Orientation*	8-16 September - 61 clusters, one representative of each grade per school, responsible for capacity building of rest of teacher in school

In general, teachers have received the curriculum 'blueprint' as a fait accompli, and are simply required to participate in a pilot, or go for 'training'. Their interests, expertise and concerns have not been incorporated into the form and content of OBE in any significant way.

The 'rationalist' model not only assumes that there will be consensus between the new-old bureaucrats and teacher organizations in developing policy, but that consensus from all teachers will be forthcoming to the curriculum plans. The table (above) reflects the schedule for training of educators using the cascade model proposed nationally, by the Western

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Cape Education Department, which has approximately 1780 schools.

The schedule reflects the enormous financial, physical and human resource demands required to train teachers in the new curriculum. It raises serious doubts about the quality of training offered to teachers and as a consequence, about the ability of teachers to actualize the promised 'paradigm shift' in curriculum and pedagogy. It reflects the 'rationalist' model operating, which has assumed that policy implementation will be automatic, that teachers require some training and then will be able to become practitioners of Curriculum 2005.

A strong argument has been made that the process is not simply a technical one, but is inherently political. A political intervention is thus required for teachers to become involved in the process of curriculum development . . .

The problem as Carnsson phrases it, is that "many policy-makers expect teachers to respond predictably to their initiatives, even though we know surprisingly little about the ways in which teachers actually come to change their everyday patterns of practice" (1996: 110). The resistance of teachers to change at a classroom level and the difficulties of implementing new curricula and pedagogical styles is well researched (Fullan, 1993; Davaidoff & De Jong, 1997). Cohen (1991) has argued that a teacher's prior instruction in and experience with a discipline is as powerful in shaping the organization and pedagogy of the classroom as any curricular framework. His research reveals how difficult it will be for teachers to learn and to incorporate new patterns of practice in their daily activity, even when they are committed to and attempt to follow new curriculum policy directives enthusiastically and particularly in conditions where they receive a minimal training in complex new curricular principles and frameworks.

The constraints and challenges of curriculum and pedagogical innovation in the context of black schools which are under-resourced and in which the quality of teaching and learning is impoverished, raises further questions about the assumptions of the 'rationalist' model. Training as a technical process, offered on a uniform schedule to all teachers across the provinces is not able to take specific contests into account.

The disjuncture between curriculum policy formulation and implementation which arises from contradictory policy commitments and contradictory models of the policy process, is at the same time a serious constraint and offers some possibilities for teacher participation.

Conclusion

This paper has aimed to facilitate understanding of the curriculum policy-making process, in the hope that it can identify spaces where teachers can push for greater participation. The distinction between a 'political' and a 'rationalist' model of the policy making process is useful in analyzing how curriculum policy-making is occurring in practice. The new education authority has proposed, in line with a 'political' model, that teachers as stakeholders would participate in an open and transparent policy-making process, particularly around curriculum. It has been argued that this commitment is in tension with policy practices conceived of in a 'rationalist' way. The tendency has thus been that teachers' participation in curriculum policy development takes place at the point of implementation of 'blueprints' developed by experts, in consultation with stakeholders' representatives. Implementation of the curriculum blueprint by teachers is seen largely as a technical issue, with an assumption that the process will proceed as planned automatically and mechanically, and that there will be consensus to these plans. The nature of policy contestation between centre and province, between civil society stakeholders and the state, between different stakeholder groupings, has been largely ignored. The impact of the way in which policy was made on the form and nature of the new OBE curriculum is thus considerable.

The disjuncture between the Department of Education's professed commitments and teachers' concerns is now explicable. The question remains for teachers-what is my relationship as a teacher to the curriculum policy-making process?

A strong argument has been made that the process is not simply a technical one, but is inherently political. A political intervention is thus required for teachers to become involved in the process of curriculum development, to actively organize board consent to a policy imperative, but to contest the direction of curriculum policy in the light of teachers' interests and experiences.

Romantic notions of full teacher participation at all levels of a democratic process are impossible, given structural conditions and the nature of the policy process thus far. The tension between 'political' and 'rationalist' models however, means that space does remain for teachers and their organizations to promote the notion of stakeholders and to push for the involvement of civil society in the development of curriculum, down to classroom level. Teachers can allow the process to continue in the rationalist mode, in which case they are likely to be called in for (inadequate) training, and then left to take responsibility (and blame) for effecting complex curriculum change. Or they can challenge the process for instance by demanding that the pace of change be slowed, or that teachers participate in developing provincial implementation strategies, or that the quality of training will equip teachers for their task, and so on. Teachers can articulate what understanding (of NQF, OBE curriculum design) they realistically need before they can participate in

curriculum and materials development. They are well placed to identify the resources schools in specific contexts may need, before they can participate in curriculum change. Teachers will need to engage actively and build working relationships with provincial education authorities, given the devolution of responsibility from the centre to the provinces for implementation of Curriculum 2005. Most crucially, if teacher stakeholder representatives are not to become mere 'rubber stamps' for decisions made elsewhere, active school teacher organizations are required. Strong teacher organizations are needed at school, district, provincial and national levels, and with a focus which equips members to engage in the complexities of OBE. The challenge for teachers and their organizations is to construct a new educational politics that allows real space for engagement with curriculum and pedagogy, to develop the ideals of democracy.

1. Senior departmental staff from each province were sent for national training, to act as facilitators within their province. They then train teachers of Grade 1, and co-coordinated a number of schools, supporting teachers and conducting classroom visits.
2. Monitoring of the trailing process took place through visits by a national team to selected schools and classrooms, to assess the manner in which programs were being implemented, and the extent to which teachers understood the workings of the program and the philosophy of OBE.

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essay

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MARGINALIZATION IN THE CLASSROOM:

An Emancipatory Approach to Action Research in a South African Province

BY DIRK MEERKOTTER

This paper was prepared as a keynote address for an international conference on Partnerships in Global Education held in October 1997 in Soesterberg in the Netherlands. A draft global education charter by the Romanian Dakmara Georgescu of the Institute of Educational Sciences in Bucharest was discussed with the purpose of forming the basis for a policy on global education enacted by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. In my paper I tried to problematize the notion of globalization and its impact on the South, so-called Third World countries. Mention is also made of the emancipatory possibilities of action research and its link with the liberation movement in South Africa. It is pointed out that the struggle against marginalization in education in South Africa has not ended with the end of the previous government's apartheid policies in 1994 and that the gap between the rich and the poor has reached catastrophic proportions - South Africa and elsewhere.

Teachers are key to democratic transformation in schools

1. MARGINALIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA WITH REFERENCE TO THE WESTERN CAPE

What happens in a country like South Africa at present, cannot be discussed in isolation of what is taking place in the rest of the world - politically, socially and economically. Similarly, if one wants to analyze certain current educational issues in a particular country or region, it is important to recognize the fact that educational processes and practices mirror the larger picture of that specific country or region. To give due credit to the Draft Charter, it does seem as if this point is taken seriously.

Therefore, before I move on to the issue of marginalization in the Western Cape, one of the nine provinces in South Africa, I think it might be helpful to say something about political and other socioeconomic issues in the Province, with specific reference to the greater Cape Town area, where newspapers report on a daily basis that crime is getting out of hand.

The Metropole with its 3.5 million inhabitants shows a vividly divided society, racially, culturally and economically, wit squatter camps stretching for miles along the N2 - one of the main entrances to the Mother City - and the extremely wealthy, living at the foot of the mountain in one of the most beautiful surroundings in the world . . . it is indeed possible for the rich to live in a Cape Town hidden from the poor and for the poor living in a Cape Town hidden from the rich. The City increasingly experiences violent conflicts between gangs and drug lords, on the one hand, and a popular, mainly Islamic, movement against crime and drugs, on the other. At the same time violence against women and children is growing unabated. These symptoms of a society, where government spending has been curbed and unemployment is in the rise, have an influence on economic growth and the dire need for job creation. So, instead of fulfilling the dreams of an annual economic growth rate of some 6%, the economy grows at a rate of just over 2% per year, and retrenchments of workers in factories and elsewhere continue.

But, against this very cryptic sketch, allow me to draw your attention to education in the Western Cape. Last year 6,000 out of 34,000 teachers in the Province were retrenched or made redundant, and more retrenchments are expected. Although the retrenchments of teachers in the Province, and to a lesser degree in other provinces in South Africa, are, in a very real sense the result of the previous apartheid regimes policies and practices which disadvantaged other-than-white groupings and massively overfunded the White education system, the Indian and Coloured education systems were also unequally funded in their favor when compared to the funding channeled to education for Blacks, the majority population of the country as a whole.

Because of the population distribution in the Western Cape, comprising a Coloured majority population and a substantial White population, it was more retrenched than in other provinces. With the uncertainty around job security, as well as harsh working conditions in most of the of the Province's schools, the current wave of demoralization in the region's teaching profession, was inevitable.

It speaks for itself that a demotivated and disempowered teacher core will

obviously not be able to educate against the marginalization and disempowerment of people in the context above, as effectively as one would have hoped for. How then does one stop further decay in our schools? And what could be done to reconstruct education in such a way that it serves the interest of the poor and disadvantaged?

There are obviously funding, policy and staffing matters that could contribute to the restructuring of our schools. However, the aim of this paper is to look at the part that teachers can play in school classrooms. First, I would like to make a point that I firmly agree with the notion that teachers are key to democratic transformation in schools, but that they can also contribute to the destruction of enabling processes in schools. Second, I would align myself with a two-pronged strategy to restructure schools in South Africa. We could focus on whole school development aimed at restoring the many demoralized teachers' self image and sense of direction and purpose as well as on the role of the teacher with regard to the continued marginalization of the children of the poor, which happens to be mainly Black.

We could focus on whole school development aimed at restoring the many demoralized teachers' self image and sense of direction and purpose . . .

2. EMANCIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AS AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY

In my own experience over the past ten years at the University of the Western Cape, I have become convinced that one of the alternatives open to classroom change, particularly with regard to democratization, reconstruction and combatting marginalization, is an emancipatory approach to action research. The main ideas undergirding our concept of emancipatory education and action research, are those of Jurgen Habermas. His views on knowledge interests assisted us greatly to sharpen our views with regard to the differences between positivistic, and technicist, endeavors in education and an emancipatory approach to education.

In conjunction with the work of radical educators like Paolo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Shirley Grundy and Stanley Aronowitz, South African Educators at the University of the Western Cape have developed their own views on education is a strategic, practical and political task - not a technicist one. And according to Henry Giroux and Roger Simon ". . . it arises not against a background of psychological, sociological, or anthropological universals (as does much educational theory related to pedagogy), but from questions such as: How is human possibility being diminished here?" (Giroux and Simon, 1989: 230).

3. THE PARTICULAR CONTEXT OF MOBILIZATION AGAINST SOCIAL INJUSTICE

Before we look at practices that could be introduced to enhance human possibilities through progressive and democratic classroom strategies, one needs to mention something about the common purpose that the oppressed had in their struggle against the *apartheid* regime.

The previous government's infringements on human rights issues were so blunt that it was easily recognizable. It was, in addition, also simpler a task to mobilize people against an obscured imperialist world order. This might very well be part of the reason why many intellectuals have retreated politically since the democratic elections of 1994. But, if one analyzed the policies and practices of the new democratically elected government, it has become quite clear that they might, like many other "developing" countries, also succumb to the guidelines of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The South African Reconstruction and Development Plan has virtually been abandoned in favor of a New Macro Economic Strategy which organizes around principles of so-called structural adjustments. These being, as in the case with Mozambique (which happens to be a much more fragile state than South Africa): a "free" market and deflation; and the liberalization of foreign exchange regulations and efforts to curb demand reduction. Politicians know this, but it seems as if very little could be done about the situation.

In a globalizing world, sovereign countries Southern Africa and other parts of the marginalized world should seriously consider the importance of working together in federal structures which could provide some recourse to counteract the destructive work of many free market oriented multinational corporations . . . not always established in democratic ways; working for maximum profit, rather than acting in the interest of the marginalized.

4. EMANCIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AND PEOPLE'S EDUCATION MOVEMENT

As far as our action research projects at the University of the Western Cape are concerned, we will undoubtedly have to continue as strongly as before 1994 in the struggle for social justice in the Country, and the aims for a *People's Education for People's Power*. I need to take you back to 1985 and mention that the recurring school boycotts and state recrimination against teachers and students led to the forming of the Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee

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(SPCC) and the convening of the first Education Crisis Conference in Johannesburg in December 1985. This was the first public forum to give major attention to the emerging slogan of *Education for People's Power. People's Education* was explained on that occasion in terms of the following aims and ideals:

it will endeavor to enable the oppressed to understand the evils of the apartheid system and to prepare them for participation in a nonracial, democratic system;

it will contribute to eliminating capitalist norms of competition, individualism, and help to develop and encourage collective input and active partici-pation by all

it will strive for the elimination of illiteracy, ignorance and exploitation of any person by another;

it will equip and train all people to participate actively and creatively in the struggle to attain People's Power in order to establish a nonracial, democratic South Africa;

it will work toward the mobilization of all students, parents, teachers and workers into appropriate organ-zational structures;

it will attempt to enable workers to resist exploitation and oppression at their workplace

(slightly adapted from SAIRR, 1985: 395).

Very soon the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee had been transformed into a body with wider geographical representation, the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC), and it was this body that appealed to students to return to the classroom after the second Consultative Conference in Durban in March 1986 and not the previous South African government. The Conference also elected a People's Education Committee to proceed with the task of developing a new education policy for South Africa. Five national commissions were to be set up (comprised of teachers, students, and parents) to research and prepare curricula.

The lesson was . . . aimed at making students aware of the problematic nature of colonialism. . . . Looking critically at social justice . . .

In spirit and practice the ethos of the masters programme in *Action Research and School Improvement* has remained committed to the above aims. In spite of the fact that these aims were stated in 1985 and that the country has had a democratic election in 1994, the aims remain as valid today as they were more than ten years ago.

5. SOME EXAMPLES OF EMANCIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROJECTS

I realize that my exposition of the local and international context in which we work might have been a bit lengthy, but I wanted to describe the context in which education in South Africa takes place. Allow me to concentrate on some of the masters and doctoral projects which aligned themselves to the aims of the *Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee* seriously.

Trevor Van Louw, in his thesis entitled: *Die klaskamer as terrein vir demokratisering: 'n Aksienavorsingsbenadering (The Classroom as Terrain for Democratization: An Action Research Approach)*, addresses the issues of participation and group work in the classroom situation. It is however, not simply about people working together in groups for the sake of doing small group work. The theme that Van Louw chose for his history class in a (so-called Coloured) Secondary School was the Namibian election before their final liberalization in 1990. They held mock TV shows on negotiations between the Liberation Movement in Namibia and the previous South African apartheid government. This would not have been an unproblematic topic today in post-apartheid South Africa, but was certainly challenging the previous regime in a very direct way. Especially so in a country as highly divided as South Africa. The lesson was, in the first place, aimed at making students aware of the problematic nature of colonialism: in thinking about the nature of social justice; looking critically at social justice; discussing and thinking about the nature of social justice. This type of critical thinking is, in my opinion, very different from the critical thinking skills neo-conservatives are talking about.

Omar Esau followed Van Louw's line through to the 1994 election in South Africa in his work: *Emancipatory Action and Reflection in a Primary School Classroom: Addressing the Culture of Silence*. Esau's thesis demonstrates that democratization, freedom and social justice can be addressed even at the primary school level. Omar Esau's project was carried out in Muslim primary school in Cape Town. The study accentuated, on the one hand, the injustice of disenfranchisement, and on the other, the necessity of reconciliation. A secondary aim was to teach the pupils about the basic principles of the voting system, which was going to be employed in the April elections, in an interactive manner, trying to break the culture of silence amongst pupils through relevant politically and educationally sound teaching.

Seksisme in Junior prim_re onderwysopleiding (Sexism in Junior Primary Teacher Education) is the title of a thesis written by Buenita K_hler, a lecturer at a teacher's college (previously for Coloured student teachers) in the greater Cape Town area. Along with her students, she analyzed the way in which college students were selected for training as teachers in primary schools, males being selected automatically for the senior primary phase and women for the junior primary phase, irrespective of their abilities and educational inclinations. Her thesis also looks at sexism and racism in prescribed textbooks. Again, cooperative learning, discussion and the problematizing of the discriminatory selection practices in the training of primary school teachers, were central to her thesis.

A recent doctoral study reports on

language project and educational innovation undertaken in the Richtersveld. The Richtersveld is a desert area approximately 900 kilometers north of Cape Town . . . extremely isolated and marginalized. Dr. Monica van Heerden ran an extensive project over three years in this area on development of reading and writing skills amongst Afrikaans speakers at five primary schools.

Her research is an excellent example of the empowerment of teachers, students and local communities. The title of the thesis is: *'n Poging tot onderwysinnovasie in die Richtersveld* (An Attempt at Educational Innovation in the Richtersveld).

Most of the sixty completed master's and doctoral theses addressed themes on participatory education, sexism, racism, discrimination, technicism, exploitation, cooperation (or the lack thereof), reconciliation and marginalization. Teachers and students, as well as students and students, learned planned, assessed, taught, discussed and wrote about most of the very relevant social, economical and political issues mentioned in the draft Charter. To democratize the classroom through participation was a central feature of all the projects.

6. CURRICULUM 2005 AND A FINAL EXAMPLE OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

A final example of the work that we do in emancipatory paradigm targets the outcomes-based Curriculum 2005. Before saying anything about the mentioned initiatives evaluating Curriculum 2005, I would like to stress the fact that I have never experienced a period in education where so many people from different sectors have participated in discussions around curriculum development and implementation. This is indeed very encouraging. But the extent to which Curriculum 2005 is moving away from the idea of a *People's Education for People's Power* is alarming. For years we have educated teachers to look critically at the behavioral objectives movement which we saw as positivistic and technicist. Curriculum 2005 advocates that it is moving into a new paradigm away from the "old" technicist content and teacher-directed approaches from the pre-independence era. Unfortunately, I have to point out that, in my view, there is very little difference between the fixed behavioral objectives approaches of the last thirty years and the line which is followed in the outcomes-based Curriculum 2005.

At this point I would like to quote from the introduction to a recent publication entitled *Education after Apartheid: South Africa in Transition:*

> *Education has provided a key area of focus for post-apartheid politics in South Africa. Yet the trajectory of politics and policy in the field has in many ways been unexpected. Instead of the popular socialist ethos of People's Education and implementation of the principles of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), the master narrative of educational reform has, to a large extent, been framed by the International Monetary Fund. Instead of the vision promoted by Peoples Education for people's power, the defining concepts of the new education have been rationalization, down sizing, line management, efficiency, equivalence and outcomes-based education.*
>
> *Much of the rhetoric that informs the process of policy development and implementation can be traced to the narrowly market-oriented global discourse that developed in the North within context of the reformist politics of the 1980s.*
>
> *(Kallaway, Donn, Kruss and Fataar, 1997:1)*

The relationship between the global politics of education and the goals of a democratically elected post-apartheid government in South Africa is clear. But is this the road that we would want to follow?

I do not want to go into too much detail with regard to the new curriculum which is to be implemented hastily by the state. What I do want to mention is that one cannot take an isolated stand opposing the initiative from the outside. It is an initiative that is being introduced by a democratically elected government . . . be it a top down venture, or not.

The latest research initiative comprises a group of ten master's and doctoral students, as well as four staff members who are looking Curriculum 2005 from perspectives:

- Ideology and curriculum
- Curriculum implementation and evaluation
- Curriculum policy
- Curriculum development
- Specific learning areas (e.g. Numeracy and Mathematics; Social Sciences; Language and Communication, etc.)
- Politics and curriculum

Apart from the academic contribu-tions that are envisaged in the field of curriculum studies, one of the aims is to give continuous feedback to the national and provincial education departments, and to inform the general public on the new curriculum venture.

In whose interests am I teaching? And, What am I doing to improve the lives of the marginalised and voiceless in my classroom? Do I act in the interest of those who are marginalised? Or in my own?.

7. CONCLUSION

From an emancipatory action research approach, I believe that teachers should be viewed as the key to transformation and promotion of social justice through the work that they do in their classrooms. To be effective it is also important that teachers be organized in progressive and democratic subject associations, as well as in democratic teacher organizations.

Emancipatory action research will not come to much if teachers only work as individuals. On the other hand, it

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will be too easy for conservative elements to repress their ideas, and on the other hand, it will be difficult for them to build a common understanding of their political role regarding the marginalization of students. Solidarity is an important principle of which the progressive teacher must take note. If I read the draft Education Charter correctly, the concept of solidarity is central to progressive educational practices.

It has been mentioned earlier that if we regard the role of the teacher in the educational situation as of prime importance that we take a position which opposes where teachers are being told by "experts" how to do their work. Teachers, in my opinion, have a wisdom about their practice that subject advisors and outside researchers do not necessarily have.

Based on the above stated premises, we act as facilitators (teachers) in the action research programmes to encourage our colleagues to ask the following questions about their own practices:

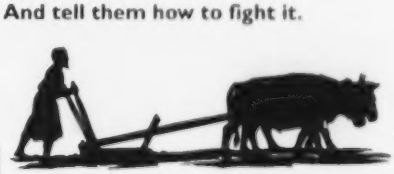
i) What bothers me in the specific situation in which I teach? (And this uncomfortable feeling that they experience, might well have to do with their own actions influencing the situation.)
ii) What can I do to change the situation? (Often the action would focus on issues such as: more participation by learners; turning around a situation in which some students are marginalized, and eliminating sexism or racism.) How do I contribute to a situation in which some are marginalized? Which strategies could I employ to improve the situation?
iii) How would I know that my actions bore fruit? (In this stage a practitioner will analyze the data collected by means of questionnaires, interviews, group discussions, her own field notes, a comparison of the actions and responses of students before and after the intervention, the feedback from colleagues as critical friends, and so on.)
iv) After having analyzed and interpreted the information, How do I evaluate the situation? And, Where do I go from here?

Our approach entails that action researchers who are committed to change and improvement, understand that a one-off attempt to improve a particular situation would imply that their attempts might disappear in sand.

Finally, I would like to stress, that for teachers in the South (geographically or in terms of ideas and world visions, as well as in terms of their experience of where they find themselves), the question has to be, in whose interests am I teaching? And, What am I doing to improve the lives of the marginalized and voiceless in my classroom? Do I act in the interest of those who are marginalized? Or in my own?

Living in the South, I find it hard not to quote, as I have often done before, the following old Indo-Chinese poem (see Alexander, 1985: 69-70):

Go to the people,
Explain to them why they are poor;
Tell them why they who work the Land
Have not enough to feed their children.
Tell them that they who make the good
Things make life, have to go bare, and
cold and hungry.
But please, let them know that it isn't
Buddha,
Nor sin, nor drought, nor flood, nor
earthquake,
But it is a locust,
Some have a name for it, they call it
imperialism;
But whatever its name, go to the
people
And tell them how to fight it.



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Policy Contestation and Conflict in the Demoralization of School Governance in South Africa

BY A. MFAHARAY & YUSUF SAYED

With the advent of democratic government in 1994, South African education has witnessed an attempt at great transformation and restructuring. There have been initiatives to integrate education and training, at higher education reform and the democratization of the organization, funding and governance of the school systems. This has resulted in the enactment of the South African Schools Act in November 1996. This paper considers the contestation regarding the SASA highlighting the contradictions embedded in the act and the likely possibilities that may emerge. It further interrogates the contestation between national and provincial educational policy formulation processes. The paper argues that policy formulation is fraught with conflict and contestation that shape the implementation of educational change.

Policy development and contestation

Policy is too simply a matter of being written and then being passively received and acted upon. At all stages of the policy process, there is constant struggle, a continual "push and pull" to achieve dominance and recognition. Implementation of policy is, as Ball (1922:22) points out, subject to interpretation and then recreation. Rizvi and Kemmis (1987:21) echo this point:

> Those who participate in a program at the school level will interpret it in their own terms, in relation to their own understanding, desires, values and purposes, and in relation to the means available to them and the ways of working they prefer. In short, all aspects of a program may be contested by those involved in a program. Moreover, a program is formed and reformed throughout its life through a process of contestation.

People do not engage in policy texts as naive readers or passive recipients. Policies will be interpreted differently as the histories, experiences, values, interests and goals of people differ. Ball makes an extremely important point in this regard:

> The simple point is that policy writers cannot control the meaning of their texts. Parts of texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc.[1]

Some scholars of public policy challenge the view that policy is the official proclamations of government and other power holders. They argue that policy is made as much - or often a good deal more - in practice as by pronouncement.

Samoff (1996:4) takes the example of language policy to illustrate this point. He cites the case of teachers in a school using language different from official policy directive to teach certain subjects. Samoff builds his argument, thus:

> When asked, a school principal might say that "our policy in this school is to use the language that our students understand. To do otherwise will make their examination marks even worse." What, then is the policy?

This paper thus examines the contestation surrounding the formulation at the national level, that is, in relation to the SASA and at the level of conflict be-tween national and provincial policy processes.

Policy contestation leading to the South African Schools Act

The SASA was the result of continual debate and contestation. This conflict will be captured in an examination of three major issues:

- community representation on governing bodies;
- the funding of schools, and
- powers and functions of school governing bodies.

In terms of the first issue, community representation on governing bodies has always been a strong point of contention. Up to the point of the passing of the

Policy is a too simply a matter of being written and then being passively received and acted upon. At all stages of the policy process, there is constant struggle, a continual "push and pull" to achieve dominance and recognition.

SASA, various alternatives had been proposed. The Hunter Commission proposed that community representatives be nominated by parents and elected by governing bodies. WP 2a and b proposed that community representatives be elected only by governing bodies. The South African Schools Bill put forward the idea of community representatives being co-opted by governing bodies.

It must be remembered that one of the foundations for democratic schools governance was that the school must promote the interests of the community in which it is located. This principle seems to have been accorded less prominence if one considers the manner in which community representatives are selected to serve on governing bodies. What eventually emerges in the SASA is a very diluted form of community representation on governing bodies in which co-opted members of the community do not possess voting powers. An important lesson to be learned here is that in sifting and considering policy options, the final selection could result in earlier positions or founding principles being ignored.

It must be remembered that one of the foundations for democratic schools governance was that the school must promote the interests of the community in which it is located.

The Hunter Committee proposed three models of school governance financing:

- the minimalist gradualism approach which would allow most existing governing bodies to continue to function including the ex-Model C schools.
- the equitable school school-based formula which is similar to the previous approach, but campaigns for equal per capita expenditure and prevents schools from raising additional finances.
- the partnership approach which includes an equal per capita expenditure but where the state's obligation to operating costs is reduced depending on parental contribution.

In assessing the three approaches, the Committee was of the view that the partnership approach contained the most advantages, since it went some way to dealing with issues of redress and equality.

WP 2b the SASB and Act rejected all three options proposed by the Hunter Report and opted for a "fourth option". This option maintains the commitment to a uniform formula-based system of funding, but enables some schools to raise additional monies. This option is known as "Middle Class Mandatory Fee Clustering (MMFC)." What MMFC would be likely to do is foster a situation in which the self-seeking behavior of the middle class will be encouraged. Governing bodies in MMFC are likely to attract those who can pay and "refuse" places to those who cannot afford to. MMVD is actually instrumental in establishing market competition and forces, thus perpetuating the legacy of privilege and excellence for some and mediocrity for others. MMFC was adopted on the advice of international consultants, their appeal being derived mainly from the call for stricter controls on government spending. Although this option may resonate with the rhetoric of equity and redress, these goals may not be the obvious result of such a strategy.

The third issue to cause tension and lead to review concerns the powers and functions of governing bodies. There are many aspects to this issue: conditions attached to certain functions; the differentiation of powers of governing bodies; the appointment of staff at schools; and admissions policy. The South African Schools Bill specifies conditions to be placed on certain functions of governing bodies. These conditions are not mentioned in previous policy texts. The two functions affected relate to admissions and language policy. In the case of admissions, governing bodies would have to administer this policy in close consultation with the provincial department. In the case of language policy, governing bodies must exercise this function within the appropriate framework, taking care that no form of racial discrimination is practiced.

In contrast to the Hunter Committee's notion of "basic" and "negotiated" powers, WP 2b proposed the idea of a "menu of responsibilities" for school governing bodies. Twenty such functions were proposed. According to WP 2b, governing bodies can choose and the provincial education departments can decide which of the twenty functions governing bodies are capable of handling based on criteria such as capacity. This notion of menu powers finds expression ultimately in SASA in the form of "functions of all governing bodies" and "allocated" functions of governing bodies.

A significant difference between the Hunter Report and WP 2a and b is that teacher employment is no longer at the discretion of governing bodies. Instead, it is the responsibility of provincial education authorities with governing bodies making recommendations. This is carried forward into the SASA where governing bodies are expected to make recommendations to the Head of the Provincial Education Department as to the appointment of both educator and non-educator staff at the school.

Another instance of policy contestation in the development of SASA is to be found in the proposed functions of school governing bodies, specifically that dealing with admissions policy. While the Report of the Hunter Committee exclude this function from governing bodies, WP 2b lists it under its proposed menu of responsibilities.

Yet it does not appear in the SASA. The one key clause that the Parliamentary Committee removed from the Act was that which gave parents the right to determine the school's admission policy. This means that between the WP 2b and the passing of the SASA some "soul-searching" by policy planners had taken place. If parents had been given the power to determine the school's admission policy, it could have meant that values such as elitism and privilege would have been upheld especially in the ex-Model C schools.

Analysis of data[2]

Parents are conceived of in different ways by the same policy document, SASA. On the one hand, parents are seen as citizens who are active in exercising their rights to determine important areas of school policy. Of course, with this set of rights comes a set of responsibilities. The parent, in exercising his/her right to close participation in the affairs of the school, is seen as an agent who contributes actively to the smooth functioning of the school. And it is mainly in the administrative sphere that the parents assist in running the school. The model that can be used here is the one of partnership, where parents are seen as being in partnership with the relevant school and education authorities, actively working towards the good governance of the school.

In this kind of partnership model, the parent is assumed to be collaboratively involved with other agents in the administration of the school. The parent is regarded as a "citizen administrator," an extension of the administrative responsibility for schooling. As such, the parent is unlikely to come into opposition or conflict with the education authorities. But this is one possibility, as the potential of conflict with the education authorities is present in some of the provisions in the SASA. In terms of the withdrawal of functions from governing bodies and allocated functions of governing bodies, the clauses state that: "Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Head of Department in terms of this section may appeal against the decision to the Member of the Executive Council." The possibility for conflict or disagreement with the officiality of the Education Department exists alongside the assumption of cooperation on the part of the parent citizens. This tension may end up being a recurring feature of any future policy dealing with governing bodies.

The parent is regarded as a "citizen administrator," an extension of the administrative responsibility for schooling.

The SASA also has another conception of parents, that is, parents as consumers. This picture of the parent as consumers is brought about in two ways. Firstly, parents are seen as the primary clients who must enjoy a numerical majority of school governing bodies. As WP 2b (Department of Education 1996b: Section 3.15) states: ". . . The Ministry has concluded that, because of the legal and financial decisions for which governing bodies would be responsible, elected representatives of parents and guardians should be in the majority on public school governing bodies." Secondly, the parent as consumer is engendered through the fees which parents have to pay to provide additional finances for school provision over and above the state subsidy.

If parents are regarded as consumers, it means then that education is akin to the market place where goods and services can be purchased. This in turn leads to the perception of parents as being self-interested, self-seeking individuals who use the school community to advance their own selfish ends. Parents become involved in the school community only because of what they can gain out of it. This is the case at most, if not all, the ex-Model C schools where the school community becomes the center for the self-interested behavior of the individual driven towards competition and the acquisition of marketable credentials.[2]

The practice of parent as consumer is facilitated by the uneven racial geography in South Africa. Children who live in elite areas inevitably attend schools in these areas, enjoying the best of school provisioning. Parents who live in these areas must invest more in their local schools while the opposite ten-dency occurs in underprivileged areas. Thus, even though schools are funded according to the number of pupils, a school in an underprivileged area with a large pupil enrollment will not really benefit because it will be unable to raise additional funds as parents in the area are economically impoverished.

The SASA allows parents as the majority constituency on school governing bodies to levy schools fees that are binding on the school community. The underlying idea here is that parents who wish to provide quality education for their children, over and above the state subsidy, should be able to do so. This provision enables the retention of class privilege and status for some as the wealthier parents are able to provide better-resourced schooling for their children.

The market that operates in education is not the same as the ideal or pure market based on the supply/demand model. The kind of market that one encounters in education may more accurately be termed "quasi-markets" (Deem, et. al., 1995). The whole purpose here is to generate additional finance based on the principle of self-

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interest. Of course, the underlying assumption is that the more additional financial resources one invests the higher the quality of education that will result. The long-term outcome of such a practice may lead to the creation of two kinds of schools; a few well-resourced ones and a majority of under-resourced, state-reliant ones.

User fees are justified on the grounds that monies raised in this way would result in savings that could be used for equity and redress purposed. But this argument is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, why would schools want to collect monies for the benefit of the state, especially monies that they themselves would not be able to keep? Secondly, there is no indication in the SASA or any other government policy test that savings that accrue from user fees will be used for equity and redress purposes.

Through the practice of raising additional funds, the SASA has succeeded in opening up market tendencies in schools governance. It introduces notions of private and public education and consequently redefines the private versus public boundary . . .

Through the practice of raising additional funds, the SASA has succeeded in opening up market tendencies in schools governance. It introduces notions of private and public education and consequently redefines the private versus public boundary in South African education. It paves the way for public education to take on the character of the private free market.

Contestation between the SASA and the Western Cape Schools Bill

In this section we will compare the provisions of the SASA with that of the Western Cape Schools Bill (Provincial Gazette Extraordinary PGE) that was published in two versions in January and September 1997. This comparison will throw some light on the implementation of the National Act by the Province.

Unlike other provinces which have decided to amend existing education legislation to conform to the National Act, the Western Cape Province had decided to go through the entire policy process and therefore formulate its own provincial education policy within the framework of the National Education Act. The Western Cape Provincial Government has presently dratted a Provincial Gazette Extraordinary (PGE) which is an education Draft Bill dealing with all aspects of education provisions within the province.

PGE does not contradict the market tendencies that the SASA opens up. In fact it endorses it, as parents will have to pay school fees which the governing body may determine (PGE 1997 section 49.1.). Given the fact that a large number of schools in the privileged sectors of the Western Cape are ex-Model C schools, it would seem as though the Western Cape would be reluctant to oppose the market orientation which SASA begins to introduce. Hence implementation of this aspect of SASA (the market forces) would probably proceed smoother than other areas of SASA which the Western Cape Province may not be so eager to embrace.

One such area concerns the existence of school management structures established during the apartheid era. According to SASA, the MEC must determine "the designation of an officer to conduct the process for the nomination and election of members of the governing body." (Department of Education 1996c: Section 28(b)). This seems to suggest that a fresh election process has to be initiated in order for governing bodies to commence with their responsibilities.

However, PGE states that: A management council, board of management . . . or other body for the control and management of a public school . . . established and constituted in terms of a law repealed by the Law and which existed immediately prior to the fixed date, shall from that date be deemed to be a governing body, established and constituted under this Law . . . [26(1)].

It seems as if provinces have the freedom to waive aside national policy. This last clause from PGE seems to nullify the idea of a whole new process of election and constitution of a new governing body that would represent a significant shift from the past. It indicated that past practices are going to be carried over into the new system. Does this not, in a sense, give previous school management councils or school boards "breathing space" in which possible past practices of inequality could be allowed to continue. The "gaps and spaces" allowed by national policy for provincial authorities to manoeuvre in, can lead to a situation in which hidden agendas are allowed to become operational. With reference to the Western Cape Province, Sayed (1997:16) states that: "The forces of reaction have been aided in the Western Cape province by the provincial education department which is opposed to central control and regulation."

Another area involves the question of the composition of school governing bodies. Again it seems as if the MEC has been granted freedom in this respect. SASA states that: "The number of parent members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights" (SASA 23(9) p. 18). However the provincial authorities in the Western Cape have deferred matters relating to the composition, powers and functions of

school governing bodies. The Bill defers a number of these crucial policy decisions to the issuing of proclamations and regulations. This is an interesting strategy on the part of the province in that while bills are subject to public scrutiny, proclamations and regulations are the prerogative of the provincial department and schools are required to implement these. This is another way in which national legislation may be altered in practice.

An interesting incongruence between the SASA and PGE is that of the role of office bearers of governing bodies. SASA specifically states that the chairperson of governing bodies must come from the parent constituency. PGE is silent on this matter. This silence can be interpreted in a variety of ways but the overall effect could be the creation of possible tension and conflict within school governing bodies. PGE makes the following provision: The decision of one more than half of the number of members of a governing body present at a meeting of that governing body, constitutes a decision of that governing body, and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding at the meeting shall, in addition to his or her deliberative vote, have a casting vote. [PGE23(3):22]

This obviously opens up the prospect of the balance of power and power relations in governing bodies. The tension and conflict could arise depending on which person chairs the meeting and the constituency to which he/she belongs; the balance of power could be swayed accordingly. By being silent on who exactly chairs meetings of governing bodies, the provincial authorities could be fostering internal dissension within governing bodies. In fact, it is a weakness of both the SASA and PGE that they have not anticipated the possibility of conflicts occurring in governing bodies and responded appropriately by making provisions in regard to arbitration, mediation or other conflict resolution strategies.

In terms of language policy, PGE states that the governing body shall determine the language policy of a school. It remains silent on the limitation clauses concerning racial discrimination, which are contained in the SASA. Furthermore, in allowing governing bodies to determine school language policy, PGE simultaneously guarantees learners to the mother tongue education insofar as it is reasonably practicable. The SASA gives leverage to governing bodies to decide whether MTE is appropriate. The effect of PGE is that it strengthens the hand of those desiring MTE in a situation where a governing body might not otherwise choose it.

PGE makes provisions for religious observances at schools to be in the hands of their governing bodies but does not mention equity or freedom of conscience.

According to the SASA, religious observances may be carried out at a public school under directives by the governing body, provided that these observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance of these events is free and voluntary. PGE makes provisions for religious observances at schools to be in the hands of their governing bodies but does not mention equity or freedom of conscience.

The payment of school fees, a potentially sensitive area is another area in which the SASA and PGA differ. The difference relates to the partial, conditional or total exemption of parents from paying school fees. In the SASA the determination of exemption is a ministerial prerogative whereas in the Bill (PGE) it is left to the governing body. This latter route could lead to abuse in the sense that it could favor the already affluent in society. Governing bodies in elite areas resort to giving preference to parents who do not require such exemption from payment, thus resulting in a situation where exemptions may not have to be considered at all by the governing body since the school already has its quota of learners.

PGE contains a strong controlling element in its recommendations concerning school governance. For example, the bill states that the head of department may exempt a learner from compulsory school attendance if the learner is pregnant, if the learner marries or if sufficient school facilities are not available. In the latter case, there is no clear commitment to making such facilities available, although the SASA directs the MEC in each province to "take steps to remedy any such lack of capacity as soon as possible and must make an annual report to the Minister on the progress achieved in doing so." (SASA 1996c: Section 3.4) SASA does not address the former issues of learners being pregnant or married.

Our final point refers to the terminology used in policy texts, especially the SASA. One comes across phrases such as "on reasonable grounds," the appointment of "sufficient persons," giving "due consideration" to representations, etc. These phases create "space" for provinces and governing bodies to manoeuvre and this has important ramifications for the implementation process. After a while it becomes a matter for the legal experts to decide what is "reasonable grounds", sufficient persons" and "due consideration."

Conclusion

The purpose of the above analysis is to draw attention to the subtleties and complexities of the implementation process. Hanekom (1987:55) refers to implementation as the "Achilles heel" of the policy process. It is during this stage that so much can (and does) go amiss. The paper has argued that policy contestation in South Africa is fraught with contestation and the current school governance policy is likely to result in continued conflict over the (re)distribution of resources and goods in society.

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[1] For a more extensive discussion of the South African Schools Act see Sayed & Carrim (in press) and Sayed 1997.

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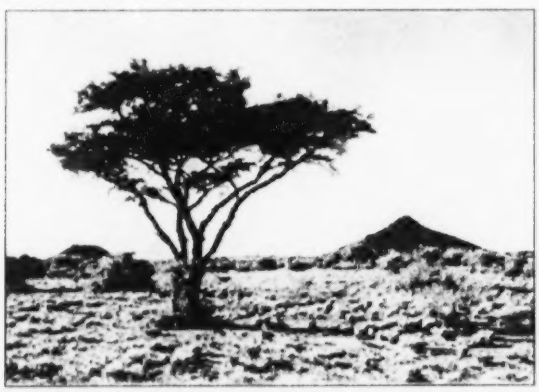

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CONSTRUCTING TUTORIALS AS A YOUNG PEOPLE'S CLUB: *An Approach to a Democratic Pedagogy*

BY ED KATZ

(Note: This is a fictional account, based on various experiences with tutorials I've taught in the English 105 Programme, a first year academic literacy course at University of the Western Cape.)

It is 8:30 am and I've arrived at Room GH 314 for an English 105 tutorial. Most of the students are already in their seats. I checked my list and noted that it was Tina's day to act as Secretary, so I handed her the "Collected Minutes of THE WAKE UP CLUB" I then said to the gathered members: "Well, can I call the Wake Up Club to order please? And I'll take attendance."

The Students had voted for the name WAKE UP CLUB to replace the old name of UNITY which we had named ourselves in the First Quarter. Some names that I recall from previous English Special classes are CLUB EXPOSE, THE AMIGOS, PERFECT STRANGERS AND CLUB NIGHTMARE. It was William Labov (1981) who came up with the idea that in order to get anything like the spontaneous speech of Harlem youngsters, he would have to set up a somewhat inviting environment. So he fixed up a clubrooms where the boys could meet with each other, and where he could organize his interviews. A name for a club, like the title of a story, suggests that something meaningful is about to be expressed . . . an adventure perhaps. A reasonably small group may also allow the development of a democratic ethos in an intimate learning environment.

Frank Smith also develops the idea that language learning is best envisioned as "Joining The Literacy Club" (1984), which is the title of his useful booklet on the subject. But the most recent and interesting development of the idea can be found in the articles and books of John Rouse, and especially in his latest book *Provocations: The Story of Mrs. M*, which was listed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NTCE) as one of the ten most recommended titles in 1993.

But by now Tina was reading from the minutes taken last week by Nomisa, another student:

"Well, we met last week. Some of the wise sayings we collected were 'Na Vrolikheid kom oulikheid', which means 'After a party you'll feel sick.' The next issue was 'Akukho kwali iphandela enye, ephandela anhye ngenethole' and that means that no person is working for other people. You have to work for yourself and your children or future.

Our activities from last week when we debated in group about the Lobola article that we read. One group's view, proposed by Lucky, was that Lobola must be abolished because it is a business. We debated about that. The other group said apartheid had an effect on Lobola, destroyed it, because Lobola is important and has its place. It shows love.

For the next week we all submit the Comparison Contrast in the Lecture Period. We are also going to hear reports next week from Elizabeth."

Just then Phumza opened the door and entered the classroom. Tina looked up from her reading and said: "Oh Phumza, you're late and you can now give us a wise saying." There were some titters around the room.

Phumza looked around. "All right. But I have to think of one," she said. The idea that latecomers might justly owe the class some small gift of favor seemed to have become a popular notion. A club needs its rituals. And it seems to have become a convenient way in which to make use of the multilingual and multicultural resources in our course. It also contributes to the growing sense of drama that can make a language classroom come alive as the significance of language in its many uses is exposed.

Phumza made her way to her seat and in the meantime I asked Elizabeth if she was ready to read their report to us. We had begun their project by each of us writing a letter to another student who was also writing to us. We had begun by telling them about the things that we enjoyed doing and why, and had asked questions to find out about our partner, always telling them why we wanted to know. In fact we exchanged several such letters. Then we met in groups of four and we read some of these letters to each other. "If you hear some interesting expression or idea, well you can report back to the whole class on that," I had said. One of the groups at that time had erupted into quite an argument with Abel, a young man who maintained that he was a Hlubi and that they were not simply part of the Xhosa "nation." In another group, Lindiwe had reported (with Elizabeth's permission) that Elizabeth refused to go to Church and was saying

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that church had become a "fashion parade." I asked both Elizabeth and Abel if they might like to write up their opinions in more detail and present such reports to the class.

"Perhaps you could make some observations of your church one Sunday, or ask other people there what their opinions were." Here is one intercession to suggest that students use more research methods. In the future this will be made more explicit so that students will see that these papers can be opportunities to learn research techniques. However, it was good to hear from Elizabeth like this, as I had noticed that she avoided entering our class discussions, often looked sulky and her absence record was rather serious.

"Are you sure you want to prepare such a report?" I asked. You don't have to if you don't want to." But she was adamant that she wished to do it.

But now Phumza was ready to give us a wise saying. Lucky had also come into the class late and he gave us a short wise saying which was "No work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." We all had a laugh about that one for a moment. And now Phumza wrote on the chalkboard:

Ikungu ilala kwintaba ngentaaba

"And what does that mean, could you tell us Phumza? For a moment or two she looked back silently

"No, I can't translate it. It's too difficult". There was some hubbub among the Xhosa members of the class.

"I'll translate it", offered Lucky. You see it means that today it would be me and tomorrow it would be you." We all looked at him, a bit puzzled.

"I don't understand that at all," said Felicia.

"In other words, what happens to me today, might happen to you tomorrow. You see?"

"Now that's pretty good." I muttered. "There's food for thought in that. But, hmmm . . . what do the Xhosa words on the board actually mean, literally?"

Bulelwa, at the board, wrote some English words over the Xhosa:

mist	lay	mountain	in all mountain
Inkungu	**ilala**	**kwintaba**	**ngentaba**

"'The mist that lies on one mountain will lie on all mountains'. That's what it means word for word" explained Lucky.

"Wow," I replied. "That is really beautiful. It's poetry. And it's interesting the way the actual words don't show you the true meaning. You have to interpret it."

"Maybe it's sort of a metaphor," said Lucky.

Ikungu ilala kwintaba ngentaaba

mist	lay	mountain	in all mountain
Inkungu	**ilala**	**kwintaba**	**ngentaba**

The mist that lies on one mountain will lie on all mountains

"Yes, maybe it is. Thanks a lot for the Bulelwa. We really need something like that to keep us going on these cold mornings. And this is going to take us a long way I think." I also wonder about the way these parables might further contribute to the construction of our tutorial as a "club" with shared principles, or interests.

"But now it seems that Elizabeth is ready to give us that report on fashion and the church." All eyes shifted to Elizabeth. She opened her exercise book and the group became quiet. She read to us:

> A church is a place where people go to praise the Lord. It doesn't matter who you are or which status. It is for poor and rich, ugly and beautiful people. As it is said that all people are equal in the eyes of God, but these days it doesn't go that way.
>
> The only people who can manage to go to the church are those who have money so that they can buy beautiful clothes for the next Sunday. What I am saying is that these days churches are fashion parades. They are places where people can go and show their beautiful clothes and how wealthy they are. Even the priests are motivating this situation because they want money which the poor people cannot manage to take out. So this excludes the poor from the church.
>
> Going back to the fashion issue. If someone don't have a beautiful dress or suit she won't go to church at all. Sometimes you would hear someone saying "I had bought a nice dress for church." Even small children they don't go to church unless their parents buy some special clothes for only going to church.
>
> I think uniforms are a very wise solution for this fashion in the house of God "church" because no one will fear that he or she didn't wear a beautiful dress or suit. All churches must take this church and fashion matter under consideration because it is the main reason why people are not attending churches.

Well, she hadn't taken up my suggestions. But it seemed to be a good beginning. I was just beginning to explore this notion of eliciting expository issues from personal writing. Perhaps more sessions in the general commentary session could assist her to expand, but without prescribing it. As much as possible, I wished to work *with* student desires, rather than override them. And after all the text did make an authentic assertion and did explain some of her reasons for doing so. And she had also proposed one way forward.

She looked up from the paper. There was silence. "Would anyone like to comment?" I said.

"You want us all to wear uniforms? said Norman. "Hey, that's another matter altogether."

Felicia sat up straight and says, "But you know the Bible says you must come as you are to pray. You shouldn't have to get dressed up special."

Nontseko pointed out, "this problem is based on tradition. She's right you see. We do need to wear

uniforms. Especially us Blacks. Because Blacks are used to gossip. And if they dress up, they gossip. Maybe the Coloureds can come dressed as you are, but we Blacks like to gossip too much."

"Wait a minute," Zuki interrupted. That's not true about Blacks only. I don't think it's just Blacks. But I don't know about the Coloureds. You can't speak about what you don't know about."

"That's so, look at my mother," says Felicia. "She spends all her money on clothes to go to church. It's not restricted to any one community."

"Yes, but uniforms are a good idea," says Constantia. "Look, you can wear other clothes afterwards, but if you go to church, you go to pray, not look at clothes."

"Ann", adds Pumla "if the atmosphere of the church is not right, it's difficult for me to pray. It's not healthy. Like we all come to the university and there's a clothes problem here as well." This brought on a chorus of acknowledgment and for a moment little private discussions broke out everywhere. "The social atmosphere is important," Pumla hammered home her point.

I raised my voice over the side-talking which had taken over. "Please, can I call the WAKE-UP CLUB to order. Let's have one speaker at a time. Felicia, you wanted to say something."

"Yes, you don't have the right to tell anyone else what to wear," Felicia insisted.

"Sure, that's easy to say. But when you come there you see those people with beautiful lovely clothes. You feel bad if you don't have something like that." Roshne stopped talking and had a very serious look in her eyes.

"Once I went to church and there was this fellow wearing a brand new suit. I mean, a really fashionable one. And this brother next to him said, 'Hey, why don't you give me that suit.' Loud so that everyone could hear. It almost ended in a fight." Norman leaned back in his seat.

"Well, I'm still not going to a church because they are telling me what to wear," Constantia states emphatically.

"But listen, some of us Felicia, Pumla, and Norman have spoken. What about the others? What's their opinion about this? Why don't the others speak?"

For a moment I thought she might be perceived as intrusive. But others so invited seemed quite willing to join in.

Lucky made a point. "The church practice is based on the culture of its own community. I am a Methodist. We do have our uniform, but we only wear it for certain occasions. But the Catholics, who are Coloured in my area in Johannesburg, do not have uniforms. People in that community practice what they want to."

"But you know," said Lindiwe, "this reflects a failure of the Christians. A Christian is supposed to care for the poor. A Christian has to share. So if you have many clothes, you are supposed to give it to the poor."

"Okay, but we also have to investigate this meaning further. By what it means to be a Christian. In other words, all are equal in the eyes of the Lord. So if you know that and you go into Church, you must know that you don't pay attention to others. We don't have to pay attention to what people are wearing. That's my option," said Lucky.

"And what about giving, " calls in Felicia "does that only count for Christians? Non-Christians also give. They can give."

"Excuse me," I spoke up. "I'm sorry, but I think we have to wind up now. It seems to be getting a bit late. Well, thank you Elizabeth for giving us such a stimulating topic. It seems to have generated lots of discussion.

This, then can be a topic for further papers as well. We've discussed the reading on Lobola (in the Course Reader) and the reading on 'Women Who Kill Their Husbands.' You can now write your own article for next week on one of these three issues. Or you can write an article on the topic 'What Happens when Students Discuss Fashion and the Church.' Rosemarie, perhaps you can extend your paper by writing about what happened here today in response to your reading. That would be interesting.

"So, that's it for today. I therefore call this meeting of the Wake-Up Club closed. The latecomers came to the desk to have their presences recorded, and we gathered up our belongings for our forays into the larger academic community.

Reflections

Now I'm back at my typewriter and I wonder what I can say about this discussion. Is this mundane gossip? Is it something that belongs in the halls of academia? Can we say that here are students engaged in an act of creating meaning? Can we also say that university is a place where students learn how to express themselves on matters they live with?

In reacting to Elizabeth's short argument, students are provoked by its closeness to their own lived situations and give it attention. They enact their understandings, objections, questions and perhaps richer and clearer views. There is the sense that these students are experiencing themselves as active meaning-makers. Their comments are directed to a genuinely interested peer audience.

Perhaps I might find some particular gratification in the way racialistic categories are challenged in the remarks about "gossiping," and how these are challenged. Could I maintain that this sort of active engagement with racist rhetoric may assist in its being more meaningfully questioned than in the distance approach which will occur in readings of more abstract theory?

Perhaps I might also find that the discussion suggests deeper issues as it progresses. The way it begins to take into consideration issues of individual choice in contexts where there is social pressure in the "social atmosphere." The freedom to look at different possibilities in these situations suggests a different positioning for students. Bernstein sees this change of position to individual choice as necessary to the development of the "elaborated code," which is also the code of academic success, perhaps political power. And

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indeed, the situation of creating their own answers, rather than constantly having the message hammered home that this answer and this language is not adequate, again places the student in a position to be the receiver. This is still the social position in which a "restricted code" is learned. The added factor of passive social positioning in an apartheid structure also seems to suggest that students here at UWC might need a restructured social situation in the classrooms, or at least in the language classrooms.

In addition, a plethora of research in the field of Applied Linguistics, as recently supported by questions addressed to "applied linguists from different parts of the world." (Matter 1992) suggests that a second language is most effectively learned when students are encouraged to develop topics which arise out of their own actively engaged thought and conversation. They need space and time to follow up their own constructions of meaning as they develop those topics. As John Trim, Cambridge (U.K. 1992), summarizes, "less emphasis is placed on the close specification of learning objectives and more upon project work which engages the strong personal interests of the learners without any attempt to forecast or control where their explorations may lead"

> . . . Students need some space where they can follow up the connections and entailments that their own writing produces.

It is often noted that students here at UWC have difficulty with developing their assertions, and there are problems with coherence in writing as well. But the solution to the problem is not simply prescriptions about how to develop a logical argument or what constraints are necessary before the student writes. Indeed, these pedagogical intercessions, done with the best of intentions, may short-circuit and interrupt the natural capacity of students to develop that coherence as they are involved in expressing the meanings that develop as they write. Overloads of content will have a similar effect.

So, it would seem that students need some space where they can follow up the connections and entailments that their own writing produces. The ability to do this is viewed as a capacity or competence within humans, rather than a skill which must be learned before the creation of that meaning. Indeed, the "skills" that do accompany such meaning making are best learned in this act of creative construction. Arguing that these are the lessons from modern discourse theory, Knoblauch and Brannon (1984) state:

> Human beings naturally make assertions in order to conceptualize experience and render it coherent. To this extent, composition is an inherent capacity which requires no teaching - at least if we define "teaching" in the classical sense of giving students something they did not have before . . .

Teachers should be clear about their relatively humble role in writing instruction: they help to nurture composing ability by helping students gain control of writing as a medium, but they do not bestow that ability upon students as a gift from the advantaged to the underprivileged (p. 68).

The language class as a 'club' also encourages students to see the important connections that do exist between academic discourse and the personal meaning-making of each individual which Volbrecht (1994) points out is an essential part of initiation into the discourse expectations we entertain and the actualities of where students are in their linguistic and conceptual development. I mean, in a club, people look after one another.

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A Curriculum Approach for Participation:

Lessons from Southern and Eastern Africa

by James Natsis

As societies become more sophisticated due to advancements in technology and communication, the methods for educating and preparing individuals for the world we live in today become more complex as well. Curriculum theorists and educators are continually striving to design a curriculum plan that will best suit the needs of the present and future generations.

The purpose of this article is to discuss a curriculum approach that will provide direction and cohesion to curriculum implementation. While preparing a curriculum plan educators must adhere to a guiding philosophy that can act as a foundation from which all concepts and processes within the curriculum may be formulated.

The curriculum approach outlined in the following pages draws on a reconceptualist mode of theorizing whose supporters reject the positivism and conservative nature of existing curriculum theory and practice. This approach to theorizing attempts to make the learner a primary focus and seeks to combine theory and practice in the interest of freeing individuals and social groups from the subjective and objective conditions that bind them to the forces of exploitation and oppression (Pinar, Penna, and Giroux, 1978).

Inspired by the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire, while drawing on examples mainly from Southern and Eastern Africa, the guiding philosophy found within the text may offer often unexplored insight to American educators.

Education for Participation

While rethinking the educational system in Tanzania a few years after independence, President Julius Nyerere looked at education as being the focal point of restructuring Tanzanian society after decades of repression as a British colony. He felt that education had to "inculcate a sense of commitment to the total community, and help the pupils to accept the values appropriate to our kind of future, not those appropriate to our colonial past." (Nyerere, 1976 p. 8) Thus, as the government and ruling party endeavored to draw up a national education curriculum for the building of a new society, Nyerere (1976) explained the guiding principle behind the curriculum:

> . . . it has also to prepare people for their responsibilities as free workers and citizens in a free and democratic society, albeit a largely rural society. They have to be able to think for themselves, to make judgements on all decisions made through the democratic institutions of our society, and to implement them in the light of the peculiar local circumstances as where they happen to live. (p. 9)

As Nyerere suggests, the educational institution is a vital element of society and that in order for it to best serve the society, the learning process which takes place within should involve all participants. Freire and Faundez (1989) argue that the "participation by the masses . . . should be a feature of all projects, health, and educational action projects . . ."(p. 123)

The curriculum should allow for students to think critically and independently while participating in decision making. This will enable them to develop into fully functional adults capable of perceiving personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, while becoming conscious of his or her own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it (Freire 1993).

The nature of Freire's culture of silence is dehumanizing as the dispossessed or "oppressed" as Freire calls them, are denied access to a form of education that would allow them to liberate themselves and criticize.

Living amongst the poor in his early life, Paulo Freire discovered what he describes as the "culture of silence" of the dispossessed (Freire 1993 p. 12). He came to realize that these people, rather than being encouraged and equipped to know and respond to the concrete realities of their world, were kept "submerged" in a situation in which such critical awareness and response were nearly impossible. Freire concluded after long observation that the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the culture of silence (Freire 1993).

The nature of Freire's culture of silence is dehumanizing as the dispossessed or "oppressed" as Freire calls them, are denied access to a form of

education that would allow them to liberate themselves and criticize. Serving as an example of an educational system that was designed to dehumanize a group of people is the former authoritarian apartheid education system in South Africa. Education that was dispensed to South African Black children under the guise of Christian national education bred psychological dehumanization (Naidou 1990). The principal instrument of repression under the apartheid regime was the Bantu Education Act of 1953.[1] It was the culmination of a long history of education for oppression dating back to the early 19th century that was original designed to bring Blacks into the colonial order not as equal individuals, but as a subordinate category which was to be integrated economically while kept outside politically and at a distance socially (Molteno 1984).

> The Whites are given an education which relates to their own situation — Bantu education ignores our situation.
>
> Brooks and Brickhill

The racist policies ingrained in the system of Bantu education made it quite clear that there was no future for the black youth. Asked to outline his objection to Bantu education, one pupil provided a typical view:

> It's aimed at our suppression. It doesn't give us the opportunity to prove ourselves, as white education does ... There are no proper facilities. The classes are overcrowded, there are no preschool facilities like those whites have, so we start off at a disadvantage. It's run on tribal lines, and there's no opportunity to question. The courses ignore views of history and stress things like Bantustans which we regret. The Whites are given an education which relates to their own situation — Bantu education ignores our situation. (Brooks and Brickhill 1980 p. 54)

Concerned with conditions in a world she saw as "so dominated by bureaucracies and inhuman technological controls," Maxine Greene (1974) states that "Curriculum must provide opportunities for them to see that they made themselves, whoever they are, constitute those worlds as self-determining human beings existing with others in intersubjective community." (p. 69)

The Role of Educator and Learner

An important aspect in allowing students to participate in the educational process involves a multi-interactive exchange of ideas and input between, not only teachers and students, but also students with other students, teachers with other teachers, and the administration with both of the above. The teacher is not just a depositor of knowledge but rather a participant and facilitator. The teacher should always be engaged in the process of obtaining knowledge, which includes learning from the students as everyone learns and shares ideas through dialogue. This is not always easy as, according to Freire and Faundez (1989), "the great majority of students . . . are used to the teacher, the wise man, having the truth, heroically, and thus do not accept dialogue" (p. 32).

While denouncing the function of institutionalized education, Ivan Illich (1971) felt that schools, by their very nature, tend to make a total claim on the time and energies of its participants. Thus, in turn, the teacher's role becomes that of "a custodian, preacher, and therapist" (p. 30). According to Illich, all three of these roles are consistent with a type of education that frowns upon the use of dialogue, i.e. a system which regards the teacher as being the possessor of true knowledge and the students as being merely passive objects. Illich's assessment may well stand uncontested unless we, as educators, begin to ask questions.

Faundez and Freire (1989) discussed the importance of asking questions which enabled the teacher to become a "learner" as well. Faundez states that " . . . In teaching, questions have been forgotten. Teachers and students alike have forgotten them, and, as I understand it, all knowledge begins from asking questions!" Freire responds by stating:

> It's what I call the castration of curiosity." What we see happening is a movement in one direction, from here to there and that's it. There is no comeback, and there is not even any searching. The educator, generally, produces answers without having been anything! (p.12)

It is thus the role of the educator and learner to interact and engage in dialogue as everyone involved shares in the learning process.

Developing a New Curriculum

In contrast with the anti-dialogical and noncommunicative "deposits" of the banking method of education, the program content of the problem posing method derives from dialogue between the teacher and the students' view of the world, where their own generative thesis are found. The con-tent thus constantly expands and renews itself. The task of the teacher in an interdisciplinary team working is to "re-present" the themes and topics to the people from whom she or he first received it, and to "re-present" it not as a lecture, but as a problem (Freire 1993). There needs to be interaction between the teacher, the students, and the administration as they all work together to develop material pertinent to their uni-verse and immediate needs. James B. Macdonald (1974) says "the hope is that out of the explicit dialogue the creative inner working of the participants will be freed and combined" (p.85).

Seeking to transform the educational process into a more dialogical relation-

ship between students and teachers, during the transition to independence in 1975 in Mozambique, educators endeavored to make education become an unfinished living process whereby the students learn to think for themselves as opposed to a mere exercise in rote learning (Barnes 1982).

At the school level student work groups of three to eight pupils were the basic units. Each class of between 35 and 50 students, which stayed together for all of its subjects, contained a number of these student work groups. Each group and each class selected a leader and sometimes an assistant who were members of a class council. In addition each class elected 'activists' to each of eight committees, or sections, which ran the school: pedagogical, administrative, social and disciplinary affairs, health and cleanliness, production, information, cultural activities, and sports (Barnes 1982). The educational philosophy in Mozambique was influenced by that being practiced at the time in neighboring Tanzania. The ideology of student involvement in Tanzania in the early days of independence called for formation of "communities" within the schools. The teachers, administrators, and pupils were to work together as members of a social unit in the same way that parents, relatives, and children were the family social unit (Nyerere 1976).

In Mozambique, all student work groups functioned as small collectives which led to a sharing of certain responsibilities. For example, the work group may check homework of each member, discussing errors in order to find correct answers. They may make up sentences in their group using grammatical construction that had been presented by the language teacher. They may also analyze whether particular statements are true or false in a history lesson and then write for the teacher one collective paper explaining their conclusions (Barnes 1982). And finally, they may participate in the assessment and evaluation of program content.

Teachers were also members of one of the sections. In addition, teachers functioned as part of a subject-area group if they were in a secondary school. Each group nominated a leader or a responsible person, who had to be accepted by the school director. These groups would hold weekly meetings to plan lessons, share ideas, and discuss teachers' concerns. Generally, teachers were also required to attend one or more classes per week taught by another teacher to better understand the teaching process and help exchange ideas as a group (Barnes 1982).

In rural areas this cooperation was extended to agriculture and village type of work in both Mozambique and Tanzania. In this way, the school became a "learning community" whereby it prepared young people for life in agriculture and small commerce by integrating the activities of daily life needed to survive in small towns and villages into the school curriculum (Barnes 1982).

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of this type of educational format that was practiced in Mozambique and Tanzania due to a number of outside factors such as war, famine, corruption, and poverty that affected the educational system. The fundamental philosophy, however, of initiating participation and interaction between students, teachers, and administrators in these examples, should serve as a model for educators around the world.

Conclusion

The educational process should involve a sharing and transfer of knowledge. Freire and Faundez (1989) stressed that "the source of knowledge lies in inquiry, in questions, or in the very act of asking questions" (p. 37). As the educational process unfolds within the framework of a reconceptualist curriculum, the source of knowledge being in question form should prevail in all facets of the learning process. Students and educators (both practitioners and theorists) should engage in closer relationships that allow students to be aware of their capacities, thus enabling them to think for themselves and grow as individuals. Drawing on "Freireism" and examples from Southern and Eastern Africa, the curriculum theory revisited in this article seeks to provide a philosophical framework within which the curriculum may take place. Maintaining the basic philosophical principles of this approach which emphasize student involvement and critical thinking, should allow educators to develop more effective and meaningful learning plans and curriculum that will benefit a larger number of people.

James Natsis has worked in Africa and is now completing a PhD at Ohio University

In this way, the school became a "learning community" whereby it prepared young people for life in agriculture and small commerce by integrating the activities of daily life needed to survive in small towns and villages into the school curriculum.

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Blacks were often referred to as Bantus

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GOING BEYOND TARZAN

Teaching About Africa in the 1990s

BY PREXY NESBITT AND JEAN ANN HUNT

A NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PH.D. CANDIDATE DID A SURVEY OF PEOPLE ENTERING THE AFRICA SECTION OF CHICAGO'S FIELD MUSEUM IN THE FALL OF 1992. SHE ASKED ONLY ONE QUESTION OF 700 RANDOM RESPONDENTS, BLACK AND WHITE, YOUNG AND OLD, MALE AND FEMALE: NAMELY, "GIVE ME THE NAME OF ANY ONE POLITICAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, POPULAR FIGURE THAT YOU ASSOCIATE WITH AFRICA?" SEVENTY PERCENT OF HER RESPONDENTS GAVE THE SAME ANSWER: TARZAN.

If we're surprised that it's not South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Bishop Desmond Tutu or even Uganda's Idi Amin, we should not be. It's quite predictable that in America today Tarzan yet stands as representing the continent of Africa in the minds of many Americans.

Tarzan is like breakfast cereal for most Americans - everybody's tasted it. The creator of Tarzan, Sears and Roebuck ad man and Chicagoan Edgar Rice Burroughs, produced twenty-six different Tarzan novels before his death in 1950.[1] Though Burroughs never visited Africa, he became the authority on the "dark continent" for most Americans. Between 1912 (the first time Tarzan appears in a literary magazine) and 1950, one hundred fifty million copies of Tarzan appeared in 50 languages. Additionally, there were three million copies of various Tarzan comic books, thirty-six commercial feature films, hundreds of radio shows and dozens of TV shows. Author Ray Bradbury memorialized Edgar Rice Burroughs' contribution to humankind at a 1975 luncheon in Tarzana, California, commenting: "I don't know what would have happened to the world if Edgar Rice Burroughs had never been born."

Tarzan is not a graying, neutral icon on the American cultural canvas, nor is the Africa which he supposedly represents. Like the John Waynes of American western cowboy lore and the Supermans and Batmans of the pavements, Tarzan embodies the values which young, white males in the United States are socialized to embrace. Tarzan is strong, tough, aggressive, and doesn't emote. He is empire in the making. As Dutch Scholar Jan Pieterse notes, Tarzan films are "a forum in which ideas about culture and sexuality ('me Tarzan, you Jane') can be worked out, but above all, it is a white-settler myth, a white-power fantasy of the type 'Rambo in Africa.'"[2]

The Africa which the Tarzan movies depict is more jungle than the jungle. Like an advertisement from the Banana Republic store, the treetop platforms and vine ropes are tailor-made for the Sunday *New York Times Magazine* Section. Tarzan's famous cry (a concoction of Johnny Weismueller) is marketed as an authentic African war cry. A white mate, "Jane", ultimately played by sex siren Bo Derek, is imported into the jungle foliage to assuage Tarzan's loneliness and provide sex scenes for the box office. In short, in the Tarzan cinemas, Africa is projected as the ideal place for the colonizer-explorer, the ultimate Eden-like paradise where the White Man's word (or more accurately his grunt) is LAW.

Renown actor Harry Belafonte, in a recent collection of interviews, edited by theologian Cornel West, describes how Tarzan movies created for him not only a negative image of Africa, but also of black people in the United States, including himself and his family. Mr. Belafonte points out:

> *My earliest knowledge of Africa was really through the Tarzan movies. The very first Tarzan movie I saw was in 1935, Tarzan and the Apes. I went to see this film about this place called Africa, with these people of color who were steeped in ignorance, steeped in folly, steeped in the absence of any articulation whatsoever and were not redeemable except when the great white hero came swinging through the trees and landed in the midst of them to give them direction and to describe life as they should aspire to it. For a long time I thought of Africa as a place I really did not want to be. Those were people that I would just as soon not know. And it was strange that so many people in my own community looked like them or something like them. And how lucky they were to have white leadership to help them.*[3]

Why is Africa presented in these ways? Is it part of universal visualization of Africa or the result of uniquely USA imagination and conceptualization? A strong case could be made that the construction of Africa done by people in the USA is rooted in the reality of race relations and a process of racialization peculiar to the United States. Put more simply, a country that has yet to get beyond Sambo, Amos and Andy, Sanford and Son, Fresh Prince, etc., imagery around its black American citizens cannot possibly conceive of the homeland of those citizens in anything but a subordinate, dehumanized and mythological framework.

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Black Americans, too, are affected by these representations of Africa. Sadly, the views of Africa held by many, if not most, Americans of African descent are largely molded by the general US media-generated perception of the "country of Africa" as being a black hole with South Africa at one end and Egypt at the other (with most Americans of all colors willing to fight over a cherished belief that Egypt is part of the Middle East!!). Nigerian scholar Bosah Ebo from Rider College in New Jersey put it most succinctly when he recently stated that most Americans believe Africa to be a "crocodile-infested dark continent where jungle life has perpetually eluded civilization."[4]

The popularized images of Africa the US media offer to teachers in the United States are appalling. They consist largely of swollen bellies, roaming animals, soldiers with guns and bare breasted women - a continent of wild children, lazy and superstitious people, ignorant of the value of the natural resources available to them. Our exposure to Africa through Hollywood and the media would have us believe: first, that Africa is only one country; secondly that it is all one type of land mass; and lastly, and perhaps most significantly, that Africa is one group of primitive peoples lacking in creativity, innovation and productivity, but abounding with savage internecine violence and warfare.

> But systematic disinformation initiatives related Africa are not limited to burned-out journalists grateful for slavery. The distorting of Africa and its realities can be seen in children's books and films.

Indicative of the above was an phone advertisement run several years ago. The commercial opened with a map of the world, a person was shown on every continent but Africa, where instead an ape sat. Such images create and reinforce inhuman and sub-human views of a place that is in reality rich in culture, languages, resources and tradition. They assist in the building of barriers which prevent not just an understanding of the real Africa, but also proscribe an understanding of the interconnectedness between the United States and Africa. The images also structure a paradigm for use in approaching Africa and Africa-related concerns. It is a paradigm in which: first, it becomes OK to exploit groups of people that are "too stupid to know better anyway," nourishing the notion that it is completely acceptable for the US to intervene into African countries' sovereign affairs, since "They" are incapable of making independent decisions. Secondly, the erroneous belief is buoyed up that what saved Africa from tribally-rooted savagery and self-destruction were the colonialists; those who brought civilization, Christianity and technology to an undiscovered "dark continent."

Africa is more than a bottomless black pit of wars and children with bulging elbows and reddening hair, the notion which conservatives like Senator Jessie Helms (North Carolina) and journalist Robert Kaplan love to promote. Africa is much more than what even the most liberated of the USA's more liberal textbook publishers or TV producers project. How Africa is taught today should not merely be shaped by a well-meaning but romanticized political imperative to project the grandeur of ancient African kingdoms and societies like Songhai, Benin, Zimbabwe and Mali. Africa needs renewed attention but that attention should not be motored merely by a triumphalist effort to emphasize the fact that math, astronomy and alphabets appeared in various African societies when Europeans were beginning to walk upright. These are historical truths and need to be treated as just that. They are historical developments which should be normalized into all historical curricula and not relegated to the African-American studies shelf or trotted before assemblies once a year on the occasion of Martin Luther King's birthday.

Africa-bashing, particularly in American books, has recently become simultaneously pervasive and subtle. Even so-called committed and well-intentioned writers and film makers present alleged "facts" about Africa which in their partial or complete distortion serve only to further the negation of Africa process already ravishing many readers and filmgoers' minds. Two recent examples of this are the 1997 feature film, "The Ghost and the Darkness" with Michael Douglas and Val Kilmer and the 1997 book, *Out of America: A Black Man Confronts Africa* by *Washington Post* journalist, Keith Richburg. *Out of America* is one of the most negative and disingenuous books about Africa which we have ever read. Its inaccuracies and half truths distort African realities. The fact that the author is a black American and a seasoned journalist (whose beat was Africa) writing about Africa in a supposed genuine effort at reflection make the work dangerous. Note for instance, Richburg's comments about protest in Kenya against the repressive policies of Moi's government. He writes: ". . . most Africans are not struggling; they have been too violently suppressed for too long, so many now see no other way except waiting for a big white marine in combat gear to come and rescue them from repression"[5] He continues on to say "not a peep of protest is taking place on the streets of Nairobi or Nakuru," making this inane and baseless observation at about the same time as Kenya (from Mombasa to Kisumu and Morsabit to Machakos) experienced one of the most profound, prolonged and oft-times violent challenges to the Moi govern-

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ment ever seen since the most intense struggles of the 70's and 80's.

But systematic disinformation initiatives related to Africa are not limited to burned-out journalists grateful for slavery. The distorting of Africa and its realities can be seen in children's books and films. Many of today's children, not all, when reading books or seeing films con-cerning Africa are being cheated. They are in a sense being victimized by either the romanticization of Africa tendency or by those who consistently represent Africa in its most negative dimensions. Illustration of this latter pattern is to be found in the 1993 edition of Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*. In the chapter entitled "The Battles of the Schools," Schlesin-ger attempts to both criticize what he sees as excessive Afrocentric pre-occupation with the glorification of the African past and praise all the changes that have taken place in the academy in terms of their attitudes toward Africa. He writes at one point:

> Where Jewish-Americans can (or could until recently) look with pride on the achievements of Israel, African-Americans, hard put to find much to admire in contemporary Liberia or Uganda or Ghana, must instead seek moments of glory in the dim past.[6]

What Pulitzer historian Schlesinger ignores are the stalwart contributions which various other African countries like Tanzania, Zambia, Madagascar and more recently, Namibia and South Africa, have made to Africa's historical landscape. What Schlesinger is obviously not well-informed about is the amount and quality of political and philosophical writing which African leaders like Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, Guinea-Bissau's Amilcar Cabral, Mozambique's Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel and Angola's Agostinho Neto have given to the world's mosaic of political thought." In being so unknowledgeable, Schlesinger not only weakens his own contribution; more importantly, he does a disservice to the thousands of readers who sincerely pick up his book because they want to better understand the world in which they live.

Omission too often makes a dramatic contribution to the distorting of Africa by US-based writers. A 1990 series entitled *Enchantment of the World* by the Children's Press in Chicago contains a glossy hardback called *Angola*. At first glance it seems very impressive: lots of Africans with their families, beautiful colored pictures, factual but also anecdotal. Then as one looks more closely a pattern of omitting or distorting certain key facts emerges. On page 116, a section called 'Angola and Namibia' contains the astonishing sentence, "Namibia . . . achieved its own independence thanks to the settlement arranged by [US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs] Chester Crocker."[8] Another example: on page 57, it is written, "the US government was divided about which side to support in Angola."[9] This is a far cry from the truth and supports the mistaken impression that many Americans have that the US stays "neutral" in most global conflicts, especially Third World conflicts. Throughout the thirty-five years of wars in Angola, from 1960 to 1995, consecutive United States' administrations, up to the Clinton administration, unfailingly supported one side — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) with hundreds of millions of dollars in arms and aid. Allied with the US in giving this support during most of this period was the former apartheid government of South Africa and the military dictatorship of the late billionaire ruler, Mobutu Tsetse Seko. As pointed out recently in the authoritative study of Southern African conflicts by *Facts on File*: "by 1978, the United States had become UNITA's main patron, annually pumping as much as $250 million in arms to the Angolan rebels."[10]

In addition to the current literature there is a group of recent films set in Africa and aimed at young audiences, that are especially onerous. This group includes, "The Ghost in the Darkness," "George of the Jungle", "Ace Ventura" and "Ace Ventura II," "The Air Up There" and "Coming to America". It is not simply concern that this genre of films distorts Africa and African realities. It is also that they are skillfully done in such an entertaining and comic fashion that most people, including and especially young people of color, are so seized by the humor that they fail to take critical note of what they're laughing at.

What are some ways that teachers can get 'beyond Tarzan'? The first task is that teachers must learn to appreciate Africa. They must begin with understanding that Africa, three times larger than the United States, is not a country. The African continent is rich in diversity, size and variety. The fifty-six countries, 2700 different peoples, and 2500 languages and dialects which make up Africa often vary widely in history, culture and structure. Africa varies from snow-capped mountains to sand-filled deserts with "jungle" being less than one tenth of the area.[11] Africa is also old. The earliest humans originated in Africa over 14 million years ago. These facts and others like them provide an enormous challenge to the classroom teacher wishing to combat the omnipresent bias about Africa and help students explore, appreciate and understand this diverse continent. Fortunately, the very media used to promote the stereotypes of Africa and its people can be used to portray a more accurate understanding. For

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teachers of younger students, picture books can be a wonderful resource and for older students music and film have also been successfully used. Both media are a familiar arena and each has a way of inviting the student to experience the daily lives, hopes, struggles, celebrations and strengths of others.

One of the authors of this article is a former teacher of second and third grade students in a predominately white and fairly affluent school. These students took on the task of studying Africa, after one class member brought in a tape of an interview she conducted with her cousin, a correspondent for ABC working in Somalia. Her interview consisted of well-thought-out questions, regarding housing, lifestyle, language and schools woven with the delightful giggles of a child trying out the role of a grown-up. The children's curiosity could not be appeased with a quick look at where Somalia sits on the world map. At that time the teacher had a very limited knowledge of Africa and was afraid to take on such a huge task; afraid of simply reinforcing stereotypes. Not knowing where else to turn, she focused on children's literature. Soon the room was filled with African folktales, art work and modern day stories representing many different parts of Africa. The children scrutinized each of the books, in part trying to figure out the differences/likenesses between the African-Americans they had daily images of and the peoples of Africa. Many rich discussions and debates occurred over whether or not an author had to be from Africa to write an authentic book about Africa. The same arguments occurred over art work. Was it African or not? If so what part of Africa did it come from? Could an African-American who traveled to Africa be qualified to write a picture book? In addition the books were analyzed for stereotypes the criteria outlined in Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task force book *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children.*[12]

Ten Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books For Sexism and Racism[12]

1. Check the Illustrations
   Look for Stereotypes
   Look for Tokenism
   Who's Doing What?
2. Check the Story Line
   Standards for Success
   Resolution of Problems
   Role of Women
3. Look at the Lifestyles
4. Weigh the Relationships Between People
5. Note the Heroes
6. Consider the Effects on a Child's Self-Image
7. Consider the Author's or Illustrator's Background
8. Check Out the Author's Perspective
9. Watch for Loaded Words
10. Look at the Copyright Date

As the children continued to read and add to the classroom library, a study of folktales ensued. These books provided a way to gain insights into the values of many different cultures. Other books provided pictures and stories of family life, work and children at play. One children's book in particular captured the children's attention. *Galimoto* tells the story of a young boy from Mali in search of wires and other resources to make a toy vehicle for he and his friends to play with. The 7 and 8 year old US students were completely captivated by the challenge of inventing such a toy. Several of them even tried it out themselves only to discover that their creations were not nearly as intricate or handsome as the one in the story or the real ones brought into the classroom.

A former stereotype for a group of people began to be replaced by a deep appreciation for skills and innovation. The culminating project for the class' exploration of literature, was to compile an annotated bibliography of African literature. The children took this project quite seriously, wanting to pass on their discoveries and recommendations to others:

AFRICA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

BY VIRGINIA KROLL

This book is based on African culture- like the different things they do. In the beginning a boy asks his father who his brothers and sisters are. The father tells his son all about his African brothers and sisters.

I would give this book two thumbs up! The author really describes people in twenty-one different cultures in Africa.

EMILY, AGE 7

THE VILLAGE OF ROUND AND SQUARE HOUSES

BY ANN GRIFALCONI

This book is a four star book (****). The pictures are great!

I like how the book tells about a typical African dinner, then a true folktale or so the storyteller says. The author really went to Africa and heard this tale from a young African woman who lived in the village that is told about in the story.

If you read this book, you will learn about village life in Cameroon, how food is prepared and how men and women live. I would highly recommend reading this book.

ALEX, AGE 8

As the teacher expanded the resources in the room to include other forms of art the class had the opportunity to experience Africa in a number of ways that were new to them. As music passed into the classroom walls the conversations turned to the discovery of patterns of joy, tones of pain and how melodies can bring people together. Photos were then introduced as a way to uncover the history and political undercurrents that have existed throughout time. They held the stories of resistance past and present to the bondage of colonization. One group of black and white photos taken in Mozambique

during the 1980's South African backed war of destabilization prompted a class discussion on cotton production, gold and coal mining and the exploitation of African people from Mozambique and elsewhere. Deeply moved by the pictures and stories of these people oceans away, one child suggested that the class take up a collection or raise money to help the people of Mozambique, "you know, like we did last year to buy an acre of the rain forest. We could buy the land and then give it back to the people." Much debate ensued after this comment. Were the people in the photos helpless? Did they need others to "save" their land? What happens to a country ravaged by war? What was the responsibility of the countries that were using Mozambique's war for their own profit?

It is important to note that the way in which resources on Africa are used is essential to expanding children's views. An in-depth look at the arts in combination with one another served to go well beyond a traditional study of another culture's holidays, food and clothing (all of which the children were intensely interested in). During this particular study of Africa, the children divided into groups in order to gain in-depth learning of one particular area of interest. The themes for study were initially generated by a list of questions the students had about Africa. Topics included holidays, transportation, art, languages, animals, housing and schools. As they shared their research with each other, one powerful discovery was that the answers to their questions were complex and depended on what part of Africa they were reading about. In addi-tion, students began to feel more connected to Africa as they explored the happenings of everyday life. Children's music was brought in and infused with our singing time, we discussed homework assign-ments and family life, as well as what it might be like to live in a city or rural area. A special event occurred when a group of visiting teachers from South Africa passed through our room one afternoon. The children inundated them with questions about schools, homework and extra curricular activities. The people of Africa took on names and identities. These personal connections were demonstrated at the closing ceremony for this unit. Based on their studies and interviews with these teachers, they thoughtfully arranged a celebration of their work by serving a variety of African foods, giving each classmate a book-mark bordered in African art and with an African name in the center of it (selected especially for their classmates based on meaning), playing music and then asking their parents (the majority of whom came) to fill out a survey with the questions they studied during the unit and to fill in the names of African countries on a blank map. The majority of the students could name and locate almost all of the 56 countries; the best a parent could do was nine.

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One of the authors teaches a successful course about African History at a school in Chicago. Titled "Twentieth Century African History and Film," the course uses an historical array of feature and documentary films as a way of capturing and sustaining high school students' interest in African history and geography. The films range from the 1932 "Tarzan the Ape Man" through the 1966 "Born Free" and Eddie Murphy's 1987 "Coming to America"[13] to the 1996 Zimbabwean documentary about the role of women in the Zimbabwean independence struggle "Flame". The historical content includes examining colonialism in North Africa, West

On Eddie Murphy's Film

'COMING TO AMERICA'

A vast green stretch of land, exotic animals roam aimlessly throughthe palace yard. An eighteen year old African prince lives out his every desire. But wait . . . something's missing - the women of Africa are much too passive and unintelligent for this young man. He deserves something more, needs something more, he needs (drumroll) **America!**

Welcome to the sickening fantasy world which is Eddie Murphy's "Coming to America." In this film Murphy manages to depreciate Africa through creating a new ridiculous stereotype of the African people, a stereotype which is based on the constant desire for sex and money. He also belittles African woman. His character ventures to the US, for a good old American woman. One who is educated and opinionated, unlike the African women presented in this film. In many films, such as "The Power of One" and "Something of Value," the role of the African woman is ignored while the white woman's role is central to the film. Swap the white woman with an African-American and you have "Coming to America."

Why is this film not deemed the racist, ignorant, piece of garbage it is? The answer to that question is quite simple: Eddie Murphy is African-American. That explains it all, if an African-American would create this, it must be acceptable. That is a statement perhaps more ignorant that the film. Yet it is one that was made by the American people through the success and continuing popularity of "Coming to America."

Mary Pasillas,
age 16, senior
Francis Parker High School, Chicago

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Africa, East a· d Southern Africa, the national liberation movements and recent developments in post-independence Africa.

Another course focuses on African Poetry as a point of entry into some high school adolescents' conceptualizing of Africa. Teaching a course based around biographies of African leaders, the teacher distributes poetry by those leaders to the students. Most of the students have been shocked to learn that many of Africa's finest political leaders were also poets. After listening to speakers about the various countries and watching films, the teacher has the students write poems responding to all they've learned. He then has the students read the leaders' poetry and their own poetry aloud. All these activities lead to the students reading a variety of information about and from the different countries and ultimately coming to new, enriched and more reality-based perspectives about various African countries and their leadership. Recently, one of us watched an elementary teacher introduce and teach about Africa to a group of third graders. The entire unit took an hour. This amount of time had been determined by the curriculum and other teachers. Students were given a whirlwind book tour through the continent and then asked to create murals portraying the various land forms of Africa and the animals that normally dwell in them. There were three total poster sized drawings; one each of the grasslands, the rainforests and the deserts of Africa. On each the children had drawn and colored in primitive looking landscapes with animals in the foreground. Zebras, camels, elephants and tropical birds stood out. The teacher expressed frustration at being given so little time to cover such an enormous subject. "I'm suppose to cover the 7 continents in 3 days. This doesn't include the time they will be taken out for art, gym and music," she lamented. "How can I even help them understand that Africa has many different countries. I'm really looking forward to Europe because I've been there and I can at least show them my scrapbook and talk about my trip." This shift to the personal is extremely important part of the story. Indeed the teaching about Europe (France in particular) focused on people. Schools, restaurants, shops, landmarks and family life were all emphasized. Unintentionally the teacher had perpetuated the popular belief that Africa is not a place of humanness.

Time, knowledge, appreciation and a willingness to combat the biases are all vital to the successful teaching of Africa. Teachers must learn to view Africa through a new set of lenses. Discarding the glasses which show Africa through Tarzan's eyes is a first step. This requires all of us to look at the biases and assumptions we have been taught and carry around with us. We have to name these prejudices so ingrained in us through the popular portrayal of Africa, Africans, African-Americans and European-Americans. The naming of these thoughts and actions will then assist us in taking the responsibility and action needed for change. In order for this to happen our children need the teaching of Africa to be more than the learning of a few words and the gathering of artifacts. This means educating ourselves about African and being willing to challenge the taken for granted truths we receive from the media. We must develop a sense of connectedness to Africa. One in which allows for analytical thought, authenticity, richness and depth so deserving of such a great continent. A connectedness that goes well beyond Tarzan.

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Jean Ann Hunt is currently coordinator for the Institute for Democracy in Education and an instructor at Ohio University. She has been a classroom teacher for 10 years.

Footnotes

[1] Cameron, Kenneth, *Africa on Film: Beyond Black and White*, Continuum, New York, 1994: 33.

[2] Pieterse, Jan, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, Yale, New Haven, 1992: 110.

[3] West, Cornel, *Restoring Hope: Conversations on the Future of Black America*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1997: 5.

[4] See Ebo, Bosah, " American Media and African Culture" in Hawk, Beverly, ed., *Africa's Media Image*, Praeger, New York, 1992: 15. The late James Snead in his analysis of the "King Kong", the first chapter of his book, *White Screens/ Black Images* (Routledge, 1994), pointed out that from the very first Hollywood films about black people in general and Africa specifically conveyed a message of black inferiority. He wrote: "The notorious 'Africa' films have as their main function to reinforce the code of the 'eternal' or ' static' black. From 'Tarzan the Ape Man' (1932) right through such recent efforts as the 'Jewel of the Nile' (1985) blacks in Africa are seen to behave with the same ineptitude and shiffleness, even bore the three hundred years of slavery and oppression, that they exhibited, according to Hollywood films years late in America" (p. 3). Two other excellent resources on this question are: Pieterse, Jan, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, Yale, New Haven, 1992: 260ff; and 2) Newsinger, J., "Lord Greystoke and Darkest Africa: The Politics of the Tarzan Stories", in Race and Class, XXVIII, 2, 1986: 59-72.

[5] Richburg, Keith, *Out of America: A Black Man Confronts Africa*, New York, Basic Books: 190. From the prelude: "So excuse me if I sound cynical, jaded. I'm beaten down, and I'll admit it. And it's Africa that has made me this way. . . But most of all I think: Thank God my ancestors got out, because, now, I am not one of them" (p. xiv).

[6] Schlesinger, Arthur, *The Disuniting of America*, W.W. Norton, New York, 1993: 85.

[7] The most comprehensive collection of the political writings of these African leaders is yet the three volume:

Braganca, Aquino and Immanuel Wallerstein, *The African Libera-tion Reader: Documents of the National Liberation Movements*, Zed Press, London, 1982. *Volume I: The Anatomy of Colonialism. Volume II: The National Liberation Movements. Volume III: The Strategy of Liberation.* Two other extraordinarily rich works are: 1) Muns-low, Barry, *Samora Machel: An African Revolutionary - Selected Speeches and Writings*, Zed Press, London, 1985: 210ff; and 2) Christie, Iain, *Machel of Mozambique*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1988: 181ff. The tragedy for readers in the USA is the virtual unavailability of all these remarkable texts except for a few specialized and restrictive libraries.

[8] Laure, Jason, *Enchantment of the World: Angola*, Children's Press, Chicago, 1990: 116.

[9] IBID.: 116.

[10] Ciment, James, *Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa*, Facts on File, Inc., New York, 1997: 3. Part of an excellent series "Conflict and Crisis in the Post-Cold War World".

[11] See the invaluable background papers by the Washington-based Africa Policy Information Center (APIC). Much of this factual information comes from a specific 1995 paper entitled "Africa: Dispelling the Myths." These papers, additional documentation and the auto-response information files are available on APICS's web site at: http://www.africapolicy.org. The e-mail address is apic@igc.apc.org.

[12] Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force, *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children*, NAEYC, Washington, D.C. 1989.

[13] See accompanying critical student review of "Coming to America" by high school senior Mary Pasillas.

Twentieth Century African **FILMS**

On Racism

Birth of a Nation by D.W. Griffith -1915

Black and White in Color by Jean-Jacques Annaud - 1976

Ethnic Notions by Marlan Riggs - 1993

African History

Something of Value with Sidney Poitier - 1957

The Battle of Algiers by Pontecorvo - 1967

Africa (8-part series) by Basil Davidson - 1980s

Out of Africa by Sydney Pollack - 1985

The Power of One with John Gielgud and Morgan Freeman by John Avildsen - 1992

Lumumba: Death of a Prophet by Raoul Peck -1992

Africa, I Will Fleece You by Jean Teno - 1992

In Darkest Hollywood by Daniel Riesenfeld - 1994

Images of Africa

Kid'n Africa with Shirley Temple - 1931

Tarzan, the Ape Man by Woody Van Dylke - 1932

King Kong by Ernest Schoedsack and Merian Cooper - 1933

Tarzan and His Mate by Jack Conway and Cedric Gibbons - 1934

The African Queen by John Huston - 1951

Drums of Africa - 1963

King Solomon's Mines

Skeleton Coast - 1987

Red Scorpion with Dolph Lundgren - 1989

The Air Up There with Kevin Bacon

The Gods Must Be Crazy

Coming to America by Eddie Murphy

Ace Ventura 2: When Nature Calls with Jim Carey - 1995

Films from an African Perspective

Cry,the Beloved Country by Zoltan Korda - 1951

Come Back Africa - 1959

A Luta Continua by Robett Van Leirop - 1971

Sambizanga by Sara Maldoror - 1971

Black Girl and *Xala* by Ousman Sembene

Sun City by Artist United Against Apartheid - 1983

Cry Freedom with Denzel Washington by Richard Attenborough

A World Apart by Chris Menges - 1988

Mapantsula by Max Montocchio - 1988

A Dry White Season by Euzhan Paley - 1989

Sarafina with Whoopie Goldberg and Leliti Khumalo - 1992

These Hands by Flora M'mbugu-Schelling - 1992

AFRICA

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

A Balloon for Grandad by Nigel Gray: Orchard Books, 1988.

A Country Far Away by Nigel Gray: Orchard Books, 1988.

A New True Book: Africa by D.V. Georges: Children's Press, 1986.

A is for Africa by Ifeoma Onyefulu: Cobblehill Books, 1993.

The Adventures of Spider by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst: Little, Brown and Co., 1964.

Africa Brothers and Sisters by Virginia Kroll: Four Winds Press, 1993.

Africa Dream by Eloise Greenfield: Harper Trophy, 1992.

African Studies Handbook, 3rd ed. edited by Margaret Maxwell: University of Massachusetts, 1983.

At the Crossroads by Rachel Isadora: Greenwillow Books, 1991.

Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions by Margaret Musgrove: Dial Books, 1976.

Beneath the Rainbow: Collections of Children's Stores and Poems from Kenya, Jacaranda Design, Ltd., 1992.

Classical Africa by Dr. Molefi Kete Asante: People's Publishing Group, 1994.

Count Your Way through Africa by Florence Temko: Lerner Publications, 1996.

Count Your Way through the Arab World by Jim Haskins: Carolrhoda Books, 1987.

Darkness and the Butterfly by Ann Grifalconi: Little Brown and Co., 1987.

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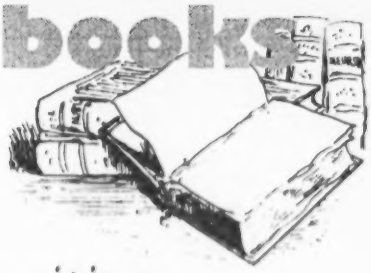

BOOK REVIEW

Education After Apartheid:

South African Education in Transition

EDITED BY: PETER KALLAWAY, GLENDA KRUSS, ASLAM FATAAR, GARI DONN

P. KALLLAWAY, G. KRUSS, A. FATAAR, G. DONN (eds.), *Education after Apartheid: South African education in transition.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1997, 206pp. ISBN 1 919713 10 7 (paperback)

This book of 10 research papers, each written by various researchers and academicians, gives the reader a perspective on the metamorphosis in the South African educational system in relation to the country's economic growth and development. This change is influenced by a diversity of policies made both by the South Africans and international agencies. Much emphasis is put on the whirlwind of events in South Africa's transition in the education *sector*, in the past decade while providing the reader with background information from the closing of the apartheid era and to the present post-apartheid period. The book points out how especially the "core" countries focus on education as a path toward economic growth and development while the rest of the world follows certain trends already set. This book, in my opinion is recommended for and was written for all people with scant and broad knowledge on South Africa, and who

This book . . . is recommended for and was written for all people with scant and broad knowledge of South Africa and who are or plan to be future policy makers.

are or plan to be future policy-makers. The introduction provides the reader with a more panoramic view of the content in the book in relation to South Africa's educational transition. The areas of discussion are equity, redress, democratization, quality, constitutional autonomy and efficiency. Emphasis is put on the discourse, antagonism and tension through policies created at national and global levels, on what should be implemented in relation to the international political economy. In the introduction, Kallaway et. al. portray the continuous birth of important national bodies critically analyzed for their performance and the "quiet withdrawal" of historically recognized freedom fighters accredited for having perpetuated the post apartheid era.

The first section, consisting of 5 chapters, is set and arranged to present different perspectives of "Globalization and Transition in South Africa's Education." Headed, "Policies in Transition," the remaining 5 chapters show the extent to which curriculum policies have been influenced, processed, implemented and how best they can be put forward.

The contributors of this book set a good foundation for open debates and critical discussions globally in relation to education, growth and development. This book, though focused on South Africa, should be (and will be) used as a global example that change from a regime or situation overnight is a dream. Towards the end of the book, no definite conclusion can be perceived other than South Africa's education is still in transition. *Education After Apartheid* is an eye opener to South Africa's condition today. It is a book that lives up to its title and worth reading. After reading this book, my hope is that on the release of the next volume, South Africa would be enjoying the fruits of its present endeavors.

FLORA C. GOMBE
African Studies Program
Ohio University

Democracy, Education & Swaziland

BY STEPHEN HOWARD

How shall we present democracy to our people? What is the role of the nation's teachers in that presentation? These contentious questions - imbued with all of the paternalism implied in "presentation"- are at the heart of the national debate over civic education in the small southern African kingdom of Swaziland. I had an opportunity to listen to this debate when, together with a South African colleague from the University of the Western Cape, we offered a workshop on "Democratic Participation in the Classroom" in Swaziland's capital, Mbabane.

The United States Government, through its US Information Service (USIS) tries to reach diverse arrays of social groups with messages about American life and culture, with the underlying theme of "our democratic political system is the key to our economic and social success." USIS invited me to Swaziland to facilitate this workshop and I suggested that I bring Aslam Fataar along with me, a lecturer in the Department of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa. I thought it important that the Swazis listen to a message about democratic education from someone who is closer to their own experiences. Aslam was active in the student-led struggle against the racist education that the South African government prescribed for its nonwhite citizens before 1994 and he taught in the township schools at the end of the apartheid era. He is now teaching pre- and in-service teachers at university level, as the teaching profession makes the transition to democracy in the new South Africa. His is a radical pedagogy that is completely engaged in the lives of his students. I explained our complementary approach at the beginning of the workshop: "While I have lived my whole life under a democratic system in the United States, I have only recently recognized how democracy functions at the classroom level. Aslam Fataar, on the other hand, has had only a short three years living democracy, but a lifetime practicing it."

The South African-Swaziland connection is a complex one and Aslam related to the Swazi teachers in a moving way.

Swaziland, a nation of less than one million people with a strong, distinct culture, is almost completely surrounded by South Africa and its 40 million people. The smaller country is also semi-dependent on South Africa for employment and most of its basic goods and services. But Aslam stated how a liberated South Africa owes a debt to the people of Swaziland for the role that some Swazis played in harboring refugees from the apartheid system. Aslam's comment as our workshop got underway was both heartfelt and an important confidence-building measure to place all of us on the same plane.

It was particularly exciting to watch this young South African teacher in action as he maneuvered around the sensitive issues of the newly-democratic-South African-"big brother" giving instructions on how Swaziland should now conduct itself. This was an important consideration since Swaziland had been an independent, Black-ruled nation since the late 1960s. But Aslam told me that he was not going to "give up my right to say something meaningful just because of this sensitivity. I personalize my examples of teaching democratically by describing my situation in Cape Town and then asking the [workshop participants] if they can identify with that." He thus avoided the generalizations that would assume that all teaching situations were like his own, while at the same time offering examples which were, as the Swazis were allowed to discover for themselves, very much like what these teachers were finding in Swaziland's classrooms. Aslam remarked following reports from small group discussions: "It is clear to me that you all are not just buying into a 'democratic system' that has no rules, that is chaotic. You are telling us that you see the ***responsibilities*** associated with democracy." Aslam's very presence at the workshop was evidence that democratic

"It is clear to me that you all are not just buying into a 'democratic system' that has no rules, that is chaotic. You are telling us that you see the ***responsibilities*** associated with democracy."

ASLAM FATAAR
Department of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa

education had an important role to play in the region and was possible to achieve.

My guru, Paulo Freire, wrote in 1981 that he would never accept an invitation to consult on educational issues in a country where he was uncomfortable with the political system. My version of this good advice has been to try to turn invitations to consult or offer workshops into opportunities to introduce junior colleagues to new issues or environments. Of course, this practice also gives me a chance to learn new ideas or facilitation styles, and Mr. Fataar provided a satchel-full of both.

The 100 participants in this workshop who impressed Aslam with their commitment to democratic practice were members of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers, a union that claims membership of 75% of the nation's teachers at all levels. USIS originally offered sponsorship of the program to the Ministry of Education. But the Ministry declined, stating that it would prefer to work towards civic education once the current review of the Kingdom's constitution had made some progress. As I reviewed this position with a high ranking official of the Ministry of Education following the workshop, it became clearer to me that there is considerable confusion about definitions of "civic education" and "democratic education". I was also impressed with the stultifying effect on teachers that a national bureaucracy for the education system can have. The education ministry is more answerable to the call of the central government and ***its*** politics and finances than to changing conditions in the nation's classrooms. The relationship between the Education Ministry and the Teachers Union is a tense one, with the latter regularly getting attention in the local media for its criticisms of the nation's education bureaucracy.

Our intention in the workshop was to introduce teachers to techniques of democratic classroom and school management, and to motivate them to learn more about these topics. Civic education, in contrast, covers know-ledge of the social and political intuitions essential for any citizen's understanding of their and their nation's role in a changing world system, and is rooted in the local political and cultural circumstances. It hardly would have been appropriate for our team of two non-swazis to lecture to Swazis on the topic of Swazi civics, and, in any case, the constitutional review commission had been organizing "civic education" programs around the country.

> "If we feel strongly that democratic values have a role to play in the development of the country, we can incorporate them into the texts of learning that we present to children in class."

What we tried to do was to provide a space in which this group of Swazi primary and secondary school teachers could consider the current state of democratic education in their schools and what obstacles existed to its more meaningful implementation. We talked about the fundamentals of democratic classroom practice like "accountability," "participation," "autonomy," "critical thinking," and "transparency" ("A PACT"). And we talked about building a community in the classroom that included parents and administrators as part of the team of stakeholders.

We placed our issues on the table and the Swazis placed theirs. The local concerns were primarily in the area of classroom management, specifically discipline, and in permitting greater participation of parents in school affairs when parents are viewed as "very traditional somebodies." "How can I develop a progressive classroom community," one teacher asked, "when the children return home to their homesteads where stern men are the only recognized authorities?" "How can I develop alternative classroom discipline practices when parents tell me that I am not caning their unruly child enough?"

We discussed the phenomenon of school as separate from other institutions of society, such as the family or church, and yet very much a product of these central social institutions. We discussed how school was one in an important chain of places for children to learn the meaning of life. If we feel strongly that democratic values have a role to play in the development of the country, we can incorporate them into the texts of learning that we present to children in class. These democratic texts, not necessarily the message provided the books are children read in school, are created by teachers as they organize the classroom around skills such as participation, communication, and critical thinking.

It was clear from our conversation with this large group of Swazi teachers, and with others working in the nongovernmental organization sector in the country, that they and their students and their clients were more ready for democratic change than their government was or would admit that the people were. Students have led movements for progressive social change elsewhere in the world and in Swaziland they may learn this lesson from an eager band of teachers. The lesson is far from complete and these teachers are writing it as they go along. The Swazis have an expression that summarizes that progress:

Unfundzo uze ufe.

You learn until the grave

Stephen Howard directs African Studies at Ohio University

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